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Total Fitness

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Total Fitness

Abstract

Total Fitness is a course of instruction designed to provide participants with evidence-based approaches and tools for improving well-being in each of five domains of health: emotional, social, family, physical, and spiritual. It is based heavily on positive psychology concepts, research, and empirically supported interventions. The twelve two-hour lessons focus on building positive attributes and psychological resources, such as character strengths, self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, and strong social connections. Each lesson provides practical skills or activities participants can use in their daily lives. They are accompanied with enough theory and scientific background to establish credibility and evidence that the applications, when practiced, will lead to meaningful change. Upon completion, participants should experience greater personal well-being and have the knowledge and confidence to help improve the well-being of their families and their military organizations.

Keywords

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, Leavenworth, CGSC, well-being, resilience, Positive Psychology

Disciplines

Other Psychology

Total Fitness

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University of Pennsylvania

A Capstone Project Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Applied Positive Psychology

Advisor: Karen Reivich, Ph.D.

August 1, 2010

Total Fitness
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Capstone Project
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INTRODUCTION

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. In light of the current environment in which military personnel are experiencing significant demands, the U.S. Army has committed to a renewed focus on the well-being of its Soldiers. It has launched an initiative known as Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF), which seeks to enhance the readiness and quality of life of its Soldiers, Family members, and Army Civilians. The vision of CSF is to maintain “an Army of balanced, healthy, self-confident [individuals] whose resilience and total fitness enables them to thrive in an era of high operational tempo and persistent conflict” (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010). Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is to be a holistic program designed to provide Soldiers practical, evidence-based skills to improve performance and resilience, “build confidence to lead, courage to stand up for one's beliefs and compassion to help others” (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010). Specifically, it seeks to increase well-being in each of five domains: emotional, social, family, physical, and spiritual. The Army selected these domains based on the dimensions of health outlined by the World Health Organization (Colonel P. Castro, personal communication, May 28, 2010).

- **Emotional** – Approaching life's challenges in a positive, optimistic way by demonstrating self-control, stamina, and good character with your choices and actions.
- **Social** – Developing and maintaining trusted, valued relationships and friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views, and experiences.
- **Family** – Being part of a family unit that is safe, supportive, and loving, and provides the resources needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment.
- **Physical** – Performing and excelling in physical activities that require aerobic fitness, endurance, strength, healthy body composition, and flexibility derived through exercise, nutrition and training.
- **Spiritual** – Strengthening a set of beliefs, principles or values that sustain a person beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength.

Command & General Staff College. As part of the CSF initiative, the Army is integrating resilience skills training into all professional military education courses (Training and Doctrine Command, Tasking Order, October 6, 2009). The Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is leading this effort in numerous ways. The College hosts guest speakers to educate students and faculty, sends faculty members and students to the Master Resilience Training course taught by the University of Pennsylvania, incorporated resilience skills training into the core curriculum, sponsors CrossFit¹ certification courses, provides chaplains' programs for couples and spiritual growth, and will implement this project – the Total Fitness elective.

The target audience consists of officers attending the Command & General Staff Officers' Course. These individuals are typically majors in their mid-30s who have ten to fourteen years of service. The majority is married and has combat experience. The purpose of this course of instruction is to provide them with a learning experience that educates, inspires, and equips them to enact sustained, positive changes in their lives. The program will provide participants with evidence-based approaches and tools for improving well-being in themselves, their families, and their organizations. Key tasks for the course include:

- Provide students with a thorough understanding of the five domains, what it means to be fit in those domains, and empirically supported methods to achieve fitness.
- Be heavily weighted towards practical application with enough theory and scientific background to establish credibility and evidence that the applications, when practiced, will lead to meaningful change.
- Enable students to enjoy greater well-being for themselves with the knowledge and confidence to help improve the well-being of their families and their military organizations.

¹ CrossFit is a strength and conditioning program that focuses on natural body movements and muscle combinations. See <http://www.crossfit.com/cf-info/what-crossfit.html>

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The desired outcome is for graduates to understand, value, and employ a holistic approach to fitness. They should also see improvement in personal well-being as measure by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985) and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1982).

Elective structure and design. The course consists of 12 two-hour lessons, with two to three lessons per week. It is designed to be practically oriented, meaning much of the class time will be devoted to exercises the students can use in their daily lives. The target audience is generally proud and self-confident. Based on informal surveys and personal experience, most consider themselves to be fit already and would resent implications that they are lacking. Consequently, the lesson plans aim to avoid deficit-based approaches. When practical, lessons include a *concrete experience* – something designed to trigger emotions and get students interested in learning (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). The majority of the instruction is presented through Socratic discussion intended to elicit learning points from the assigned readings and to relate the material to the students' life experiences. The lessons also include exercises to reinforce learning, or to serve as mechanisms for delivering instruction. Students will be asked frequently to explore how they can use what they have learned. When appropriate, they will demonstrate their ability to apply the material via written assignments or tasks to repeat exercises at home.

The exercises presented in this course have been empirically validated through sound, scientific study. They are based on years of research and have withstood peer review. The few that have not been empirically validated as presented here are based on other proven variations or the consensus of numerous experienced, respected researchers and practitioners. These

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exceptions will be noted where appropriate. This level of validity is crucial to establish credibility with the audience.

The overall **learning objective** for this course is for students to understand fitness in a holistic sense and employ concepts, tools, and activities to improve fitness in all five domains. This includes: i) defining fitness for each domain, ii) applying appropriate, empirically-supported activities or programs to improve fitness for self, and iii) identifying activities or programs to improve fitness in families and organizations.

The lessons are designed to complement or build upon each other. Lessons 1-3 establish a foundation by providing students with an overview of Total Fitness, setting the tone for the elective, allowing participants and the instructor to get acquainted, and ensuring students are familiar with the foundational concepts of **character strengths** and managing **emotions**. In Lessons 4 and 5 students will examine **social** fitness. They will learn about the many benefits of social connections and will practice skills to strengthen them. In Lessons 6 and 7 students will examine and practice methods of strengthening **family** relationships. Lessons 8 and 9 will address **physical** fitness with a focus on the science of the mind-body connection. Students will also experience non-traditional physical fitness programs, such as CrossFit and yoga. The following two lessons address **spiritual** fitness, to include its definition and methods to improve one's spiritual resources. During the final 2-hour meeting, students will review the concepts, interventions, and activities they learned over the course of the elective. To facilitate a coalescence of their learning, students will prepare an action plan describing how they will implement, either personally or professionally, what they have learned.

At the conclusion of this course, students should have a thorough understanding of the five domains of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and what it means to be fit in those domains.

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They should also be able to employ practical methods to achieve greater well-being for themselves, their families, and their military organizations.

Why does it matter? Eighty percent of the students who graduated from the resident Command & General Staff Officers' Course in June 2010 had combat experience. Fifty six percent of the Army officers in that class had multiple combat tours (Class 10-01 Demographics, 2010). These numbers reflect an increasing trend as operations in Iraq and Afghanistan continue. Soldiers of all ranks are experiencing demands unprecedented in the Army during peacetime. This challenging environment does not guarantee Soldiers will experience mental health problems. In fact, most don't, but the data show that a significant number are dealing with some form of psychological distress (Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center, 2010, May; MHAT 6 (OEF), 2009; MHAT VI (OIF), 2009; Thomas et al., 2010). The following statistics bear that out.

- Of 2,442 Soldiers surveyed in Iraq, about 12% had psychological problems (acute stress, anxiety, and depression) (MHAT VI (OIF), 2009).
- Of the married Soldiers, 16% stated their intent to divorce or separate. This measure has increased every year since 2003 (MHAT VI (OIF), 2009).
- Of 1,382 Soldiers surveyed in Afghanistan, about 14% met screening criteria for psychological problems (MHAT 6 (OEF), 2009).
- Among junior enlisted Soldiers in Afghanistan, 31% reported marital problems. Twenty one percent of sergeants reported marital problems (MHAT 6 (OEF), 2009).
- From 2001 through 2004, 10% of all deployed Soldiers who were hospitalized had a diagnosed mental disorder (Wojcik, Akhtar, & Hassell, 2009).
- The highest rates of mental disorder were found among the enlisted, females, younger, and single (Wojcik et al., 2009).
- For the year ending April 2010, 31% of Soldiers completing a post-deployment health reassessment reported symptoms of depression three months after returning home. Nearly 33% reported depressive symptoms six months after returning (Armed Forces., 2010, May).

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- In a study of 4,933 Active Component Soldiers, *one year* after deployment 22.8% reported symptoms of depression or PTSD, with most reporting some functional impairment² (Thomas et al., 2010).
- In the same study, out of 2,684 Reserve Component Soldiers, *one year* after deployment 27.8% reported symptoms of depression or PTSD, with most reporting some functional impairment (Thomas et al., 2010).

As the statistics show, the demands of the current environment are taking a toll. A significant number of Soldiers – nearly one in three in some cases – are struggling with the challenges they’re facing. Notably, some of these struggles continue even after Soldiers return home. The leaders who attend the Total Fitness course may or may not experience the same challenges, but they almost certainly will have responsibility for individuals who do. The aim of this course, then, is to provide them with empirically supported methods to enhance resilience in themselves, their Soldiers, and their families.

² Based on *DSM-IV* and PTSD Checklist score >50. Functional impairment measured as answering yes to the question, “If you checked off any of the problems above, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?” Responses of “somewhat difficult” were considered to indicate some impairment.

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Character strengths are the bedrock of the human condition, and strength-congruent activity represents an important route to the psychological good life.

Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 4

This lesson, and all that follow, is geared towards building on what's right with people rather than fixing problems. Undoubtedly, some of the activities presented will help in fixing problems, but the primary goal is to offer knowledge and skills that will help individuals build resilience, which we define as "the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity" (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010).

Literature Review. "Becoming a person of character and a leader of character is a career-long process involving day-to-day experience, education, [and] self-development" (Department of the Army, 2006, p. 4-12). Peterson and Seligman (2004) describe 24 character strengths and virtues that they suggest are ubiquitously valued across cultures. Virtues represent "core characteristics valued by moral philosophers and religious thinkers" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 13) and are thought to be universal in the human species. Character strengths are "the psychological ingredients—processes or mechanisms—that define virtues" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 13). For example, the strengths of creativity, curiosity, love of learning, open-mindedness, and perspective all involve the acquisition and use of knowledge, and are considered components of the virtue of wisdom (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Similarly, we can see the virtue of justice in the strengths of citizenship, fairness, and leadership. Character strengths contribute to fulfillment and shape how we cope with adversity. They are manifest in our thoughts, words, and/or actions (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Because they are so integral to whom we are, we introduce students to Peterson and Seligman's classification in the initial module and will draw on this throughout the elective. This lesson uses positive introductions as a vehicle for highlighting strengths and beginning a dialogue about them. Positive introductions are brief

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stories in which participants tell of an event in their lives that highlights them at their best. It is not about “achievements or performances, but rather strengths of character” (Peterson, 2006, p. 27). The following is a personal example of a positive introduction.

I teach adults – mid-career professionals – and I normally serve as a staff group advisor. It’s like being a homeroom teacher, coach, and counselor. On one Friday in October, I taught the first half of a two-part lesson. The next day I was thrown from a horse and shattered my left wrist. I went to the emergency room where they immobilized it and told me to come back Monday to see an orthopedic surgeon. In the mean time, if my fingers turned blue or went numb I was to return to the emergency room.

My wife and I stayed in a nearby hotel just to be safe, because we didn’t live close to the hospital. The next morning my fingers were quite numb, so we went back to the emergency room. The on-call orthopedic surgeon came in and twisted and pulled to put most of the bones close to where they should be and told me it was beyond his level of expertise to fix. He scheduled me for a consult with a specialist the next afternoon, along with a CT scan and MRI, and for surgery on Tuesday.

The next morning, Monday, I went back to work to teach the second half of the lesson I had started on Friday. My students, upon seeing my condition, naturally asked what happened. I explained the ordeal and that I had more appointments that afternoon and would have surgery the next day. A couple of them incredulously asked why I was even there. “Couldn’t somebody else teach this class?” they asked. I admitted that I could have had someone cover the class for me, but “This is *my* class. They wouldn’t know what we talked about Friday and they wouldn’t know *you*. Yes, it hurts, but I can still do my job.” So, I propped my arm on a stack of manuals on the desk and proceeded with the lesson.

I actually forgot about that day until shortly before graduation when one of the students reminded me. “You didn’t have to be there,” she said. “Most people wouldn’t have come in, but you did because you care so much about what you do and about us. That speaks volumes about what kind of leader you are, and it meant a lot to me – to all of us.” I didn’t know what to say. I didn’t know I made that kind of impact. I was so touched by her sincerity and what she said, and I have to admit that tears came to my eyes. I thanked her for sharing that with me and noticed the tears welling up in her eyes as well. Then, in a break from our professional culture, we hugged then parted ways.

The purpose of this exercise is twofold. Anecdotally, it’s a great icebreaker. It quickly builds group cohesion by breaking down barriers to communication. Since each student shares a personal story, they are thereafter more open to sharing thoughts and experiences, which facilitates learning in the succeeding lessons. The second purpose, though not yet scientifically validated, is that talking about one’s highest strengths may boost the effects of the *using signature strengths in new ways* exercise (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). From

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experience, after using positive introductions, participants are much more cognizant of their own and each other's strengths. They become more aware of how they're using strengths and gradually get better at seeing opportunities to employ them.

In *using signature strengths in new ways*, students take an online survey to identify their top five strengths. They are then tasked to use one of them in a new and different way every day for a week. Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson (2005) conducted a study with a convenience sample of 411 adults recruited via the Internet. The subjects were randomly assigned, again by Internet, to use one of five happiness exercises or a placebo control exercise for one week. Study results at the one-month mark show *using signature strengths in new ways* to be effective in boosting happiness and reducing depressive symptoms. Moreover, participants who continue the exercise are happier and less depressed for up to six months (the length of the study). It is possible that participants get better at the exercise over time and find it to be enjoyable, thus increasing the likelihood of continuing. Merely identifying one's top strengths did not produce lasting results (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

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Learning Objective. Understand the concept of character strengths, learn how to identify them in self and others, and recognize how we use strengths personally and professionally.

Student Homework.

Read: (32 pages)

Peterson, C. (2006). *A primer in positive psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press. Read Chapter 2: Learning about positive psychology: Not a spectator sport, pp. 25-28 only, and Chapter 6: Character strengths, pp. 137-164.

Complete the following. Write your positive introduction following the example in Chapter 2 of the *Primer*. Take the VIA Survey of Character Strengths. Create a free username and password at <http://www.authenticchappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx>. Click on “Register” and fill out the online form (your anonymity will be protected). Click on “Questionnaires” then select “VIA Survey of Character Strengths.” Complete the questionnaire and print the results. Bring results to class. Also, on the same website, complete the Positive Affect, Negative Affect Schedule, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (See *Appendix B*). Bring your results to class.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student homework.

Bring 11 x 17 reflection sheets and five Post-it Notes® for each student.

Additional Reading:

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410-421. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.5.410

Optional reading:

Lesson 1 Character Strengths

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Chapter 1: Introduction to a “manual of the sanities,”

In *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification* (pp. 3-32). New York:

Oxford University Press

Lesson 1 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
15 minutes	<p>Welcome/Course Overview</p> <p>Brief introduction. Have students fill out name placards. Share and briefly discuss the course learning objectives and provide an overview of the five domains of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and how the course addresses them. Give overview of Lesson 1 agenda.</p> <p>Explain that we will use the PANAS and SWLS to see if, or to what degree, the activities (interventions) we learn affect us. We'll take measurements prior to the course and on the last day of the course. For those who volunteer, we'll also conduct a follow-up measurement one month after the course. We'll use anonymous, aggregate results to see the affect on the class as a whole. Students may monitor changes in their individual results.</p> <p>We hypothesize that over the five weeks of the course, students will see a moderate increase in positive affect, a slight decrease in negative affect, and slight increase in satisfaction with life.</p> <p>The SWLS invites a general assessment of one's life. Since this course is only five weeks, it is unlikely to cause a significant change in the students' perspective of their lives as a whole. We hypothesize that as students continue using various exercises, they may see a gradual increase in SWL, hence the one-month follow-up measurement. However, since this is after the elective has ended, it will be voluntary.</p> <p>We've modified the PANAS to measure positive and negative affect <i>in the past month</i>. This is to minimize the likelihood of skewed results due to assessing a “good” day or “bad” day when they complete the measurement. It will also allow students to reflect on the majority of the course when completing the PANAS the second time. We expect positive affect to increase more than negative affect will decrease because the majority of the interventions are designed to increase positive emotions.</p> <p>There are limitations and shortcomings to this measurement plan. Students will experience many interventions and may continue to practice any number of them – or none at all. It will be impossible to isolate the effectiveness of any particular</p>

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	<p>intervention. Students will also experience significant changes outside of the class that may affect their measurements. They will transition from mandatory classes to electives. That may be a relief for some, but may cause anxiety for others. Additionally, they will be getting close to graduation with all the thoughts and emotions that such a change elicits.</p> <p>Handout reflection sheet to be used over the duration of the course and explain how it might be used. (See reflection sheet and instructions.)</p> <p>Remind students that their significant others are also invited to take the tests.</p>
10 minutes	<p>Introduction to Positive Introductions</p> <p>Instructor explains the concept of a positive introduction and appreciative listening. Partners should respond in ways that build on what was said. They should ask questions or make comments that show acknowledgement and draw out or highlight strengths they noticed. They might ask questions like, <i>“That was very creative. Do you feel that creativity is one of your strengths?” “Did using that strength feel like the real you?” “Dude, you must have been stoked!”</i></p> <p>They should not be dismissive or try to share your own story while someone is telling theirs. At this point, the instructor gives his/her own positive introduction (needs to be authentic).</p>
35 minutes	<p>Positive Introductions</p> <p>Break students into pairs or groups of three. Have them talk through/read their positive introduction to each other while their partner(s) listens appreciatively. Note: Encourage students to find a quiet place outside the classroom if they want.</p> <p>Have them take a break before returning to class.</p>
50 minutes During the students’ positive intro’s: Post the character strengths on butcher paper or on the dry erase boards around the room. One sheet or section per strength.	<p>Character Strengths. Verify students completed the VIA Survey.</p> <p>Introduce the concept of character strengths. Be prepared to explain how and why the VIA was developed (see Peterson & Seligman, Chapter 1). Knowing and, more importantly, using your character strengths makes you more effective as a leader. Army doctrine states, “character, a person’s moral and ethical qualities, helps determine what is right and gives a leader motivation to do what is appropriate, regardless of the circumstances or the consequences (FM 6-22, 2006, p. 4-1). A leader of character embodies the Army Values, Warrior Ethos, and empathy. In terms of BE, KNOW, DO, character is the BE that helps us KNOW and DO what’s right. Identifying your character strengths is the first step to developing them. Additionally, using strengths in new ways increases happiness and decreases depression. Knowing the strengths of your unit (or family) allows you to capitalize on what’s best in each individual such that</p>

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potential weaknesses are less relevant . . . or even irrelevant. Be sure to point out that strengths at the bottom of the list are NOT necessarily weaknesses. The variation between #1 and #24 may be slight. It will be even less between the top strengths. Numerical ties are ranked alphabetically. Peterson & Seligman (2004) termed the top five strengths as *signature strengths*. These are strengths that we really own. We enjoy using them and yearn to act in accordance with them. The number five is not set in stone; it may be the top three to seven that really resonate. If you disagree with the survey, go with what feels most like you. If you take the VIA again, you may see a change in order over time, which is not uncommon, especially for strengths that are relatively close in value (absolute values are available for a fee at <http://www.viacharacter.org>). Strengths are characteristics – displayed in what we do. They are morally valued in their own right, not for the results they achieve. Wisdom for example, is valued – using wisdom to run a gang is not.

Point out the 24 strengths posted around the room. Have students write their names on five post-it notes then post them to the strengths chart on the dry erase boards representing their top strengths. Discuss any visible trends. Students may be surprised to see “capacity to love and be loved” more prevalent than “leadership.” If time allows, show distribution of strengths for U.S. adults (Peterson, 2006, p. 153).

Ask students to recall their introductions. **Note:** Positive Introductions are done *before* presenting background information on the VIA in order to get the students engaged and interacting as quickly as possible. From personal experience, the introductions will be memorable enough to be recalled a short time later, and in some cases, months later!

What strengths do you recognize in your own or your partner’s introduction?

Suggest they capture any personal reflections on the reflection sheet.

Show the following quote and ask a student to read it out loud (Reivich, 2010, March)

“When you are commanding, leading [Soldiers] under conditions where physical exhaustion and privations must be ignored; where the lives of [Soldiers] may be sacrificed, then, the efficiency of your leadership will depend only to a minor degree on your tactical or technical ability. It will primarily be determined by your character, your reputation, not so much for courage—which will be accepted as a matter of course—but by the previous reputation you have established for fairness, for that high-minded patriotic purpose, that quality of unswerving

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	<p>determination to carry through any military task assigned you.” General of the Army George C. Marshall (1941), (Field Manual 6-22, <i>Leadership</i>, 2006, p. 2-3).</p> <p>Pose the following questions and allow individuals to reflect on their worksheet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What strengths do you consciously bring to the Army?</i> • <i>What strengths do you use in your personal life?</i> • <i>As leaders, in what ways do you capitalize on the strengths of others?</i> • <i>How can you use your strengths more as a leader and at home?</i>
10 minutes	<p>Ask if there are any remaining questions or reflections.</p> <p><i>What are the key ‘take-aways’ from today’s lesson . . . for you personally?</i></p> <p>Preview next lesson. Review assigned homework.</p>

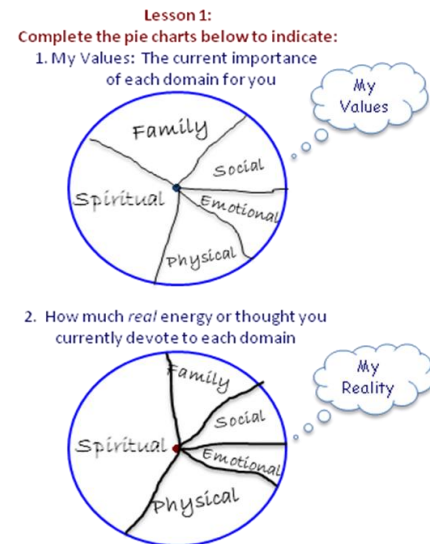
Lesson 1 Character Strengths

Appendix A

Reflection Sheet Instructions

Filling out the reflection sheet will increase students' self-awareness and will help them formulate their action plan at the end of the course.


- My Strengths: fill in with signature strengths during Lesson 1. May add others if they exemplify the real you.
- Pie Charts: fill in during or immediately after Lesson 1.
“Slice” the top pie according to how important each domain is to you. The second pie should reflect how much time you’re actually devoting to each domain right now. The intent is to identify your priorities and see if your actions are in line with your priorities.
- Boxes for the five domains: fill in during the appropriate lessons. Each is subdivided by “home” and “work,” in recognition that our experiences in each may be different. The intent is to capture significant insights, lessons learned, or ideas. Notes might include ideas for applying skills you learned in class, or recording areas you’re strong in or need to work on.



Lesson 1 Character Strengths


Appendix A

Reflection Sheet



Total Fitness Elective – Personal Reflection Sheet

(Complete during/after Lessons 1 – 11)



My Strengths

1. Fairness and justice
2. Honesty
3. Perspective
4. Spirituality
5. Judgment, critical thinking

Emotional Fitness – Reflections, 'ahas', ideas for action

Home: I react emotionally before thinking things through. Will try to use ATC.

Work: Too easily stressed. Will try Put it in Perspective

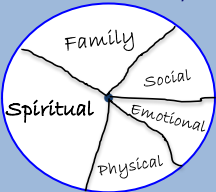
Social Fitness – Reflections, 'ahas', ideas for action

Home: Don't do much socially . . . at all. Arrange a Strength Date with Joe and Sarah.

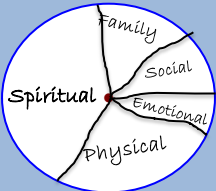
Work: I'm rather impersonal. Will try to use ACR.

Lesson 1:
Complete the pie charts below to indicate:

1. My Values: The current importance of each domain for you



2. How much real energy or thought you currently devote to each domain



3. Any reflections or questions for yourself to consider during this course arising from your pie charts?

Need to put more effort toward family relationships.

Family Fitness – Reflections, 'ahas', ideas for action

Home: Family has been on hold because of work. A lot has changed since deployment. Suggest playing "love Map" with the wife.

Work:

Physical Fitness – Reflections, 'ahas', ideas for action

Home: Have a good PT program in place, but need to push a little harder. Will try CrossFit.

Work: Not doing PT at work right now.

Spiritual Fitness – Reflections, 'ahas', ideas for action

Home: Good Bible study plan in place. Would like to try spiritual meditation.

Work:

(Original Reflection Sheet created by Vanessa King, 2010)

Lesson 1 Character Strengths

Appendix B

Measurements

Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985)

DIRECTIONS: Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number in the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Slightly Disagree
- 4 = Neither Agree or Disagree
- 5 = Slightly Agree
- 6 = Agree
- 7 = Strongly Agree

- _____ 1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
- _____ 2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
- _____ 3. I am satisfied with life.
- _____ 4. So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.
- _____ 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Add Items 1-5. This equals your average Satisfaction with Life Scale.

Lesson 1 Character Strengths

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1982)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and write the appropriate answer next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way *in the past month*.

1 = Very slightly or not at all

2 = A little

3 = Moderately

4 = Quite a bit

5 = Extremely

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| ____ 1. Interested | ____ 2. Distressed | ____ 3. Excited |
| ____ 4. Upset | ____ 5. Strong | ____ 6. Guilty |
| ____ 7. Scared | ____ 8. Hostile | ____ 9. Enthusiastic |
| ____ 10. Proud | ____ 11. Irritable | ____ 12. Alert |
| ____ 13. Ashamed | ____ 14. Inspired | ____ 15. Nervous |
| ____ 16. Determined | ____ 17. Attentive | ____ 18. Jittery |
| ____ 19. Active | ____ 20. Afraid | |

Positive Affect: Add Items 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19

Negative Affect: Add Items 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20

Affect Balance: Total Positive – Total Negative

Lesson 2 Emotional

Let's not forget that the little emotions are the great captains of our lives and we obey them without realizing it. ~Vincent Van Gogh

The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program defines emotional fitness as “approaching life's challenges in a positive, optimistic way by demonstrating self-control, stamina and good character with your choices and actions” (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010). Toward this end, Lesson 2 briefly examines the effects of positive and negative emotions and provides a useful skill for increasing self-awareness, which in turn fosters self-control and sound choices and actions.

Positive Emotions. Research psychologist, Barb Fredrickson, has studied positive emotions extensively. She uses the encompassing term *positivity* to include the whole range of positive emotions, such as joy, amusement, love, appreciation, gratitude, and more. Positivity also incorporates positive meanings, optimistic attitudes, and open-mindedness (Fredrickson, 2009). Her research, and that of others, shows that positivity enables us to think more broadly, or to put it another way, to see more possibilities. With a boost in positivity, our thinking becomes “more creative, integrative, flexible and open to information” (Fredrickson, 2003, p. 333). In one study, for example, subjects watched short films designed to evoke emotions such as joy, serenity, fear, or sadness. A control group watched a neutral film. The subjects were then tasked to choose which of two comparison figures more closely resembled a “standard” figure. Small details of one comparison figure resembled the “standard,” while the overall arrangement of the other figure more closely resembled the “standard.” Subjects who watched the joy-producing film chose the figure whose overall arrangement matched. Compared to those who experienced other emotions (or neutral), the happy group demonstrated a broadened thinking pattern. In another series of tests, subjects experiencing positive emotions, compared to other groups, showed more creativity evidenced by their ability to complete a word association test (Fredrickson, 2003). The

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object of the test is to think of a word that best relates to three words given in the test (e.g. given *mower*, *atomic*, and *foreign*, the subject would think of *power*). Additionally, Alice Isen (as cited in Fredrickson, 2003) found that doctors given a bag of candy (a positive emotion boost) were quicker to integrate case information and less likely to fixate on initial impressions when presented a medical case to solve. She also found that negotiators induced to feel positive emotions were more likely to come up with integrative solutions to tough bargaining problems. These results are promising given the importance of decisions and actions in the CSF description of emotional fitness. Fredrickson also found that that our positive attitude makes us more enjoyable to be around and infects others, resulting in better social connections. Social connections, she asserts, are a psychological resource. Positivity is also associated with lower levels of stress-related hormones and increased growth-related hormones (Fredrickson, 2009).

Resilience. Positive emotions also build resilience by increasing optimism and buffering against depression. Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, and Larkin (2003) studied college students in early 2001, then a subset (47) of them after the attacks of September 11. The 47 students were between 18 and 25 years old, similar in age to many junior enlisted Soldiers and new lieutenants. The study found that after the attacks, the subjects experienced anger, fear, sadness, disgust, and contempt to varying degrees. They felt sympathy often. Seventy-two percent exhibited signs of depression. The participants also reported feeling gratitude, interest, and love, among other positive emotions. Not everyone experienced these emotions to the same degree, though. Analyses revealed that the subjects who had previously scored higher on a 14-item resilience scale were the ones who, after September 11, experienced negative emotions less frequently and positive emotions more often. Further analysis showed that positive emotions were the key

ingredient that buffered resilient people against depression and fostered the posttraumatic growth of psychological resources – life satisfaction, optimism, and tranquility (Fredrickson et al. 2003).

The study suggests that the broadened attention and thinking induced by positive emotions enabled this effective coping. The authors also suggest that finding positive meaning might be the most powerful means of cultivating positive emotions in times of crisis. Further, spiritual, or religious beliefs may increase the likelihood of finding positive meaning, though they are not essential to finding it. To sum up, resilient people experience distress in times of crisis, but they're not overwhelmed by it. Positive emotions, which they feel more often than others do, protect them from depression and foster the growth of resources, further enhancing resilience.

Upward Spiral. Studies have also shown that positive emotions and broadened thinking are mutually reinforcing, that is, each produces more of the other (Fredrickson, 2003). Consider again the emotionally positive negotiators who found more integrative bargaining solutions. Successful bargaining induces further positive emotions and develops a sense of mastery. They can then approach future negotiations with optimism and confidence, which will again broaden their thinking and improve their odds of success. They are on an upward spiral (Fredrickson, 2009). Given the multitude of challenging, complex tasks that Soldiers face, it makes sense for them to take advantage of the benefits of positivity. It will help them cope with adversity in an open-minded way. Broadened thinking will help them see more solutions, which leads to more successes, which produces more positive emotions.

There is one important caveat; there are times when a narrower view is appropriate. Negative emotions narrow our focus, which is particularly helpful in threatening situations (Fredrickson, 2003). As an example, when military planners analyze a course of action, they

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methodically look for flaws. In purposefully identifying what may cause a plan to fail, they are able to adjust the plan or build contingencies to mitigate risk. It certainly helps to be open-minded when creating multiple courses of action, but planners would need to shift their focus during course of action analysis. Fortunately, we have an unlimited ability to shift back and forth between broad and narrow focus (Fredrickson, 2009). Planners, for example, can think broadly while brainstorming solutions to a tactical problem, then deliberately focus on an enemy's most dangerous course of action and the potential consequences, then brainstorm creatively again for ways to prevent or preclude those consequences.

Self-Awareness. Having established the benefits of positive emotions, we'll turn now to skills for improving self-awareness and gaining greater control of our emotions and reactions.

Although we handle most situations reasonably well, we all have some that we don't handle as effectively as we'd like. Certain situations trigger strong emotions, and we may respond to those emotions by saying or doing things that are not helpful. How many times have we said something in the heat of the moment that we later regretted? Or reacted in a way that may have been appropriate in Iraq, but not in the living room with the kids? By becoming more aware of our thoughts, emotions, and reactions, we are better able to regulate them. This lesson offers a method for identifying how our thoughts trigger emotions, which in turn drive our reactions. By slowing down the process, we can check the accuracy of our thoughts. We are then better able to break rigid thinking patterns that undercut resilience. With flexible, accurate thinking we can respond more appropriately and effectively (Reivich, 2010). We control our emotions, rather than the other way around.

Albert Ellis described how we react to disturbances using the ABC model. "A" is an Activating event, "B" is our **B**eliefs about that event, and "C" is the **C**onsequences brought about

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by our beliefs. Rational beliefs generally lead to helpful consequences while irrational beliefs lead to destructive consequences (Ellis, 1991). In layman's terms, when something happens – good or bad – we have thoughts about that event. Our thoughts, in turn, trigger feelings, which drive our behaviors. If the thoughts are inaccurate, our response will likely be inappropriate. Often, these thoughts flash through the mind so quickly that we don't notice them, and we mistakenly believe the activating event triggered our feelings and behaviors. Using the ABC model, however, allows us to detect our thoughts and understand the emotional responses to them (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Since the skill focuses on those heat-of-the-moment thoughts, Dr. Reivich, for clarity, refers to this as the ATC model when training Soldiers – **A**ctivating event, **T**houghts, **C**onsequences. We increase self-awareness by separating what happened (**A**), from what we said to ourselves about it (**T**), from our feelings and behaviors (**C**) (Reivich, 2010, p. 10).

Case Study. Major Stevens is an operations officer, and she recently completed a movement order for an upcoming deployment. The Commander reviewed the order and returned it with three words written in red at the top, 'Please see me.' Major Stevens immediately feels a sense of dread. Her heart rate skyrockets and she begins to sweat. Her mind races trying to think of all the mistakes she might have made in the order. Minutes seem like hours as she ruminates on the butt-chewing she anticipates from the Commander. Her anxiety is plainly visible to the rest of the staff.

Now, let's look at the situation again when Major Stevens uses the ATC model. When she feels that sense of dread and her pulse quicken, she slows down and examines her thinking. *'The boss is mad. I must have really screwed this up.'* These thoughts triggered the anxiety, which prompted her unhelpful ruminating. She now has a chance to check the accuracy of those

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thoughts. *‘There are no other notes indicating something is wrong. I put a lot of effort into this and had others review it; it can’t be **all** wrong. If I made a mistake, I’ll fix it and move on. The boss may just have additional guidance.’* She’s not ruminating and has a more optimistic outlook. She grabs a note pad and prepares to see the Commander. Using ATC didn’t rule out the possibility that Major Stevens made mistakes in the order, but it did allow her to recover quickly and respond more effectively.

Lesson 2 Emotional

Learning Objective. Understand the benefits of positive emotions and apply the ATC model to increase self-awareness and improve control of emotions.

Student Homework.

Read: (35 pages)

Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). The value of positive emotions: The emerging science of positive psychology is coming to understand why it's good to feel good. *American Scientist*, 91, 330–335.

Reivich, K., & Shatté, A. (2002). Chapter 4: Learning your ABCs. In *The Resilience Factor: 7 essential skills for overcoming life's inevitable obstacles*. New York: Broadway Books.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student reading. Provide ATC work sheets for each student.

Additional Reading: None

Optional reading:

Fredrickson, B. L. (2009). *Positivity: Groundbreaking research reveals how to embrace the hidden strength of positive emotions, overcome negativity, and thrive*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Lesson 2 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
8 minutes	Give brief overview of Lesson 2 agenda Show video clip, Barb Fredrickson explaining Positive Emotions (6:33) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ds_9Df6dK7c
7 min	Ask students for their thoughts. Near the end of the time allotted, guide the discussion towards the benefits of positive emotions.
20 minutes	Positive Emotions Guided discussion to bring out the learning points from the reading.

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	<p><i>So, what do emotions do for us?</i></p> <p>Draw out that they often (though not always) compel us to react – to do something. Keep in mind we still have a choice whether and how to react. They can narrow or broaden our thinking.</p> <p><i>What good are positive emotions?</i></p> <p>Main points from the reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think more broadly, or see more possibilities. • More creative, integrative (doctor diagnosis example), flexible and open to information • Grow psychological resources: life satisfaction, optimism, tranquility • Build resilience by increasing optimism and buffering against depression. • Positive emotions and broadened thinking are mutually reinforcing • Build good mental habits, such as mindfulness (awareness of the moment) and openness to savor what’s good in our lives • Make us more able to cope with adversity in an open-minded way
5 minutes	BREAK
35 minutes	<p>ATC</p> <p>(The following is an abridged lesson from the U.S. Army Master Resilience Training Course, designed by Karen Reivich, copyrighted by The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania)</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATC helps to build Self-awareness. • ATC gives your greater control over your Emotions and Reactions. <p>Review the ATC model. Explain why we use ATC vice ABC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activating Event: Note that it can be a significant adversity (death of someone you care about) or a minor issue (parking ticket). Indicate that Activating Events can also be positive (getting a promotion or having a baby). • Thoughts: Underscore that these are our heat-of-the-moment Thoughts, or what we say to ourselves following an Activating Event. • Consequences: Cs are what we feel and do following an Activating Event. <p>Walk through with students:</p> <p>Activating Events - The who, what, when, where (not Why). Can be challenge, adversity, or positive event. Ask students for examples, break into the 4 W’s.</p> <p>Thoughts are what you say to yourself in the heat of the moment. They drive immediate reactions and can be productive or counter-productive. Ask for likely</p>

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	<p>thoughts based on the activating event examples they just gave.</p> <p>Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotions: What you feel in reaction to the Activating Event. • Reactions: What you do in reaction to the Activating Event. <p>Ask for examples of Consequences based on the previous discussion. Emphasize that Reactions can be what you do and what you don't do (e.g., avoiding a person or situation).</p> <p>We all have situations that we handle effectively and other situations that we don't handle as effectively as we need to. Have students identify (on paper) situations they typically don't handle as effectively as they'd like. Give them a couple minutes, then ask for a few examples. Identify the thoughts and resulting emotions. Review chart showing Thought-Consequence patterns.</p> <p>Walk through a few slides showing an AE, Thought, and Emotion, and have the students identify likely reactions. Ask if they have any Thought-Consequence patterns they're aware of. Be prepared to give personal example.</p> <p>Note the goal of ATC is to separate the Activating Event, our Thoughts about it, and the Consequences and to identify patterns in our thinking that make us weaker or decrease performance.</p>
30 minutes	<p>ATC Practical Exercise</p> <p>In pairs, students will use ATC to work through personal activating events.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instruct them to choose an Activating Event, from their own lives, that is specific, vivid, recent, meaningful, and personal as opposed to a general theme or ongoing issue. 2. Mention that an Activating Event can be a positive event (e.g., getting a promotion). 3. Point out when participants slip into problem solving and redirect them to focus on separating the A, T, C. 4. By the end of the activity, make sure that participants have separated the A, T, C and the T-C connections make sense (e.g., loss thoughts lead to sadness, violation of rights thoughts lead to anger, etc.).
15 minutes	<p>Wrapping up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students what they learned through this activity and record critical points on the dry erase board (or flip chart).

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Ask one or two to share an A, T, C, and check that the T-C connection is accurate.3. When a student shares a C that does not seem to follow from his or her T, work through the example slowly and help the student clarify the Thoughts and the Consequences. Look for additional Thoughts that were not described initially.4. Ask students to describe any patterns they noticed in their Thoughts and/or Consequences.5. Ask students to discuss whether their reaction was helping or harming them. <p><i>How can you use ATC to enhance your performance at work?</i></p> <p><i>How can you use ATC to build stronger relationships?</i></p> <p>Check on Learning.</p>
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Lesson 3 Emotional

We tend to perceive what we expect to perceive.

Richards J. Heuer, Jr.

Lesson 3 continues our look at approaching challenges in a positive, optimistic way and making sound decisions. Specifically, this lesson introduces skills for countering inaccurate, counterproductive thinking – thinking that reduces our effectiveness and saps our resilience. Our brains receive more information than they can process, so we take mental shortcuts. This is necessary to function without being overwhelmed, but often times our shortcuts lead us to inaccurate or unhelpful conclusions (Heuer, 1999). For example, a common shortcut is the “availability rule of thumb” in which people make decisions based on the most readily available information – things we can quickly recall (Heuer, 1999). When US policymakers were weighing options for our involvement in Vietnam, they compared the current situation to the most readily available, seemingly comparable, scenarios – the failure of appeasement to preclude World War II and the successful intervention in Korea (Heuer, 1999). The mental shortcut simplified decision-making and saved time but led to inaccurate comparisons.

As the highly regarded CIA veteran, Richards Heuer, noted, “people form impressions on the basis of very little information, but once formed, they do not reject or change them unless they obtain rather solid evidence” (Heuer, 1999, p.14). While this can certainly lead to ill-informed decisions, some errors in thinking deplete resilience and make people vulnerable to depression (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Our misinterpretation of reality causes us to expend energy in unhelpful ways and diminishes our ability to act and adapt appropriately. In simpler terms, we form conclusions and act – or fail to act – based on inaccurate or incomplete information.

Fortunately, we can challenge our unhelpful thinking. The following is a description of six common errors, termed “thinking traps,” and empirically proven techniques that may be used to avoid them. It is important to first note that avoiding thinking traps does not imply that we

should continually second-guess our intuition (Reivich, 2010). Intuition is a valuable asset, especially in threatening situations.

Thinking Traps

Jumping to Conclusions – “making assumptions without the relevant data” (Reivich & Shatté, 2002, p.97). Jumping to conclusions is a common pitfall that leads people to act impulsively.

As noted in the previous lesson, our thoughts drive our consequences (emotions and reactions).

If our thoughts are based on incomplete or inaccurate information, the consequences may prove

to be less than favorable. **Example:** You call a subordinate unit at 3:30 in the afternoon and

there’s no answer. You immediately think, “Those slugs have already gone home for the day!”

You can avoid this thinking trap by slowing down and asking, “What is the evidence for and

against my thoughts?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 18). In this case, you might think, “A ringing phone

doesn’t mean they’ve left. They don’t normally leave at 3:30; maybe they’re in a meeting.”

Mind Reading – “believing we know what those around us are thinking and acting accordingly”

(Reivich & Shatté, 2002, p.111). The corollary to this trap is expecting that others know what

we’re thinking. Mind reading, like most thinking traps, is very similar to jumping to

conclusions; we form conclusions without the appropriate information. It is quite common in

relationships where one partner “knows” what the other is thinking and/or expects the partner to

do the same. **Example:** You and the staff just finished giving a briefing and you notice the

Commander has a scowl on his face. You think, “He must think we really botched this one.”

Your anxiety begins to rise. The counter to this trap is to speak up. Ask, “Did I express myself?

Did I ask for information?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 18). In this instance you might say, “Sir, it looks

like something is bothering you. Is there something else you need us to look at?”

Me, Me, Me (Personalizing) – “the reflex tendency to attribute problems to one’s own doing” (Reivich & Shatté, 2002, p.105). Referring to the ATC model again, if our thoughts gravitate towards self-blame or worthlessness, we’ll feel an inordinate amount of guilt and sadness. This pessimistic style of thinking is a proven risk factor for depression (Reivich & Shatté, 2002; Seligman, 2006). There is, however, some benefit to personalizing. If we see ourselves as the cause of a problem, then we can be the solution. The key, of course, is making an accurate assessment of the problem and our role in it. If we always perceive problems as being our fault, without regard for external factors, our resilience will suffer. Likewise, if we attribute problems to aspects of our character that we believe are unchangeable (I’m stupid) we lose hope and further reduce our chances for success. **Example:** You’ve been deployed twice, and now that your “home” again you’ve been working late every evening. Your kids have become unruly. You think, “It’s my fault; I’m a bad parent.” You feel like a failure and begin to dread going home. We can avoid falling into this trap by looking outward and asking, “How did others and/or circumstances contribute?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 18). In this instance, you realize that you cannot control when you get deployed, and that is not a reflection of your parenting. Based on what you learned in the reintegration classes, you know it’s normal for kids to have adjustment issues sometimes. This is an issue you and your spouse are *both* working on, and it will take time.

Them, Them, Them (Externalizing) – “failing to locate those elements of an adversity that are genuinely of [our own] doing and within [our] control” (Reivich & Shatté, 2002, p.108).

Externalizing robs us of the belief that we can change our situation for the better. When viewed through the ATC model, externalizing thoughts lead us to blame others or to blame circumstances. As a result, we are likely to feel angry. **Example:** Every time your staff

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publishes an order, you have to publish several FRAGOs (changes) to correct mistakes in it.

You think, “These guys are completely untrained and unreliable.” Nothing changes except your growing irritation. Counter this trap by looking inward and asking, “How did I contribute?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 19). For the example above, this question might help you realize that you share responsibility. As an experienced staff officer, you should coach and train junior staff members. You should also make sure the orders are reviewed before being published.

Always, Always, Always – “believing that negative events are unchangeable and that you have little or no control over them” (Reivich, 2010, p. 13). This thinking trap leads people to quit trying – to give up. If we believe that a problem will *always* exist, we see no hope for changing it, so we don’t bother trying. **Example:** After a mission at the National Training Center (NTC), you receive some tough critique from the observer/trainer. You think to yourself, “I’ll never get this right!” Your self-doubt begins to affect your performance. You can counter this toxic trap by grabbing control. Ask yourself, “What’s changeable? What can I control?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 19). In this case, you realize you can change your actions on the next mission. You can learn from your mistakes and improve your performance.

Everything, Everything, Everything (Character Assassination) – “believing that you can judge a person’s or your own worth, motivation, or ability on the basis of a single situation” (Reivich, 2010, p. 14). This thinking trap involves overgeneralizing. We attribute the causes of problems to other people’s (or our own) character rather than a specific behavior. When we assume problems to be a matter of character, we are more likely to believe they are unchangeable. For example, if Joe doesn’t get his work done on time, we overgeneralize and assume he is lazy or just no good at his job. We attack his character rather than addressing the specific behavior. Likewise, if we experience a setback, we attribute the problem to personal

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character flaws affecting everything we do (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). **Example:** Continuing the previous scenario at the NTC, after tough critique you think, “I’m all ate up. I just don’t have what it takes to be a leader.” You can avoid this trap by looking at behavior. “What is the specific behavior that explains the situation?” (Reivich, 2010, p. 19). You consider the observer’s comments and note that there were some specific tasks you didn’t do well. It doesn’t mean you’re a bad leader; you just made some mistakes like everyone else.

In each of these thinking traps, we react based on inaccurate or incomplete information. It is akin to a military unit acting on “bad intelligence,” with all the inherent risks. Likewise, some risks are greater than others. Of the thinking traps, Me, Always, and Everything are the most toxic. We may all fall into these traps temporarily, but those who get stuck in them may have a pessimistic explanatory style. People with a pessimistic explanatory style tend to view problems as being their fault (Me), unchangeable (Always), and affecting everything they do (Everything) (Seligman, 2006; Reivich, 2010). Assume for example, Captain Roberts, a pilot, fails a flight examination, and he has a pessimistic style of thinking. He might think to himself, ‘I really screwed that up (Me). I’ll never be able to pass this check ride (Always), and I’ll get kicked out of the Army” (Everything). A more succinct example might be “I’m just no good at anything” (Me, Always, Everything). This self-defeating pattern of thinking leads to a sense of helplessness, and it is a risk factor for depression (Seligman, 2006). There is no hope of overcoming the failure when it is seen as affecting everything and lasting forever. The problem is more pronounced for those who ruminate – the people who constantly tell themselves how bad things are (Seligman, 2006). The military profession, especially in the current environment, is extremely demanding, complex, and fast-paced – often with low tolerance for error. Every Soldier (every human for that matter) experiences challenges, and rare is the individual who has

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not suffered a setback or failure of some kind. A Soldier with a pessimistic style is bound to face repeated opportunities to employ that self-defeating thinking. With the resulting sense of helplessness, he becomes less confident and more prone to negative thinking, which narrows his focus (Fredrickson, 2003), and reduces his chances of further success. His negative thinking becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). He is no longer able to bounce back from adversity.

Research has shown additional risks associated with this style of thinking. Pessimists, are up to eight times more likely to become depressed in the face of adversity, they do worse in school, sports, and work, their health is worse, they die sooner, and they have “rockier interpersonal relations” (Seligman, 2002, p. 24). In a fascinating study of nationally ranked college swim teams, Seligman and colleagues found that explanatory style predicted performance (Seligman, Nolen-Hoeksema, Thornton, & Thornton, 1990). The study looked at the University of California at Berkley men’s and women’s swim teams, both of which were nationally ranked and had several swimmers with national and world records. Results showed that swimmers with a pessimistic explanatory style were more likely to perform below expectations during the season. It also predicted how they would perform following a defeat. During training, swimmers were given false times (slower) after completing their best event (100-meter, 200-meter, etc.). After adequate rest, the optimists swam as well or better on a subsequent trial. Pessimists, on the other hand, performed worse. It is believed that the expectation of future failure undermines the incentive to try (Seligman et al., 1990). Additionally, in a study of inmates at four maximum-security prisons, the data revealed that an inmate’s pessimistic explanatory style upon incarceration correlated strongly with depression measured near the end of his sentence (Peterson & Seligman, 1984).

Catastrophizing.

Another style of thinking that can compromise resilience and performance is catastrophizing. Individuals who fall into the Always trap tend to see the cause of problems continuing to affect them in the future. If they're also stuck in the Everything trap, they believe the problem will continue *and* will affect everything they do (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). If left unchecked, this negative thinking about the future can turn in to catastrophizing and produce considerable anxiety. People who *catastrophize* dwell on a current adversity and imagine a subsequent chain of disastrous events stretching into the future (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). In simple terms, it is mentally overacting and imagining dire, but highly unlikely, consequences. It can stem from an actual adverse event or from an imagined event in the future. Catastrophizing occurs as a chain of "and then" thoughts. For example, Sergeant Rock can't find his M-16. He thinks, 'I won't be able to find it . . . and then the whole battalion will be searching for it . . . and then I'll get an Article 15 . . . and then I'll never get promoted . . . and then I'll get put out of the Army . . . and then I'll end up as a Walmart greeter. Each step in the chain does not appear to be a great leap of imagination, but taken together the whole scenario is irrational. Catastrophizing fuels anxiety, depletes energy, increases helplessness, and distracts us from solving problems rationally (Reivich, 2010). Catastrophizing and self-blame are also predictive of depression (Martin & Dahlen, 2005). **Putting It in Perspective** is a skill that enables us to deal with adversity by thinking more accurately about its implications (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). To use this skill we 1) list worst case outcomes, 2) list best case outcomes, 3) list most likely outcomes, and 4) identify plan for dealing with most likely (Reivich, 2010). The lesson plan that follows provides more detail on each step.

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Learning Objective. Develop mental agility by countering counterproductive thinking patterns.

Student Homework. Read:

Reivich, K., & Shatté, A. (2002). *The Resilience Factor: 7 essential skills for overcoming life's inevitable obstacles*. New York: Broadway Books. Read Chapter 5 and Chapter 8.

Seligman, M. E. P., Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Thornton, N., & Thornton, K. M. (1990). Explanatory style as a mechanism of disappointing athletic performance. *Psychological Science*, 1(2), 143-146.

Instructor Prep. Complete student reading. Provide ATC worksheets and Thinking Trap key. Note: Inform students prior to this lesson that it will be 30 minutes longer than usual.

Lesson 3 (2.5 hours)

Time	Activity
2 minutes	Describe agenda and learning objective for Lesson 3
3 minutes	<p>Thinking Traps (The following is an abridged lesson from the U.S. Army Master Resilience Training Course, designed by Karen Reivich, copyrighted by The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania)</p> <p>Review definition of Thinking Traps: Thinking Traps are overly rigid patterns in thinking that can cause us to miss critical information about a situation or individual.</p> <p>Link Thinking Traps to the ATC model. Because Thinking Traps are Thoughts, they drive our Consequences (emotions and reactions).</p>
50 minutes ~8 min per trap. It will be hard to cover each TT in 8 min. Limit questions as needed.	<p>Describe Thinking Traps and Ways to Counter Them</p> <p>Jumping to Conclusions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask a student to read the scenario presented on the slide. 2. Ask the students to describe the nature of the Thinking Trap. 3. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. 4. What if the Thought is correct? Is this still a thinking trap? Emphasize that Jumping to Conclusions is when you are certain it's true before you have the evidence to support it. 5. Ask how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness

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	<p>as leaders.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Counter: (slide builds) Slow down: What is the evidence for and against my thoughts? Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.
	<p>Mind Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask a student to read the scenario on the slide. Ask the students to describe the nature of the Thinking Trap. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. Ask students to share examples of times they fell into this trap and explore how the trap affected their Cs (Emotions and Reactions). Ask how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness as leaders. Counter: Speak up: Did I express myself? Did I ask for information? Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.
	<p>Me, Me, Me (Personalizing)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read the scenario on the slide. Ask the students to describe the Thinking Trap. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. Acknowledge that there are times when it's important to take full responsibility for a situation. However, there are also times when it is critical to look at all of the possible contributing factors to a problem. This allows an accurate root cause analysis and allows the people around you to develop their own skills. Ask how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness as leaders. Counter: Look outward: How did others and/or circumstances contribute? Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.
	<p>Them, Them, Them (Externalizing)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read the scenario on the slide.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ask the students to describe the nature of the Thinking Trap. 3. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. 4. Ask students to share examples of times they fell into this trap and explore how the trap affected their Cs (Emotions and Reactions). 5. Ask how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness as leaders. 6. Counter: Look inward: How did I contribute? 7. Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.
	<p>Always, Always, Always</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the scenario on the slide. 2. Ask the participants to describe the nature of the Thinking Trap. 3. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. 4. Ask participants to share examples of times they fell into this trap and explore how the trap affected their Cs (Emotions and Reactions). 5. Emphasize that this is one of the most toxic Thinking Traps because it leads to helplessness and hopelessness. 6. Discuss how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness as leaders. 7. Counter: Grab control: What's changeable? What can I control? 8. Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.
	<p>Everything, Everything, Everything (Character Assassination)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the scenario on the slide. 2. Ask the participants to describe the Thinking Trap. 3. Review the Thinking Trap and read the definition. 4. Ask participants to share examples of times they fell into this trap and explore how the trap affected their Cs (Emotions and Reactions). 5. Mention that one way to get around Character Assassination is to remember "one time, one thing." 6. Ask how this Thinking Trap could undermine resilience and their effectiveness

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	<p>as leaders.</p> <p>7. Counter: Look at behavior: What is the specific behavior that explains the situation?</p> <p>8. Ask students to comment on how the question will help the individual notice critical information missed because of the Thinking Trap.</p>
3 minutes	<p>Review the six Thinking Traps and key principles.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They're common: It's common to fall into a Thinking Trap, particularly when stressed. 2. They narrow our field of vision: Thinking Traps often lead to missing important information. 3. Notice patterns: What are the patterns in the traps you fall in? 4. Use Critical Questions: Be on the lookout for your common traps and use the Critical Questions to help broaden your awareness of important information. 5. Mental Agility: Avoid Thinking Traps builds our Mental Agility.
15 minutes	<p>Practical Exercise</p> <p>With the group, use ATC on a sample scenario. Identify the Thinking Traps and ask Critical Questions. (5 min)</p> <p>Then, in pairs, have students work through one Activating Event each (5 min each). Have one use an event from their professional life and one use an event from their personal life. Use ATC, identify the thinking traps, ask the critical questions.</p>
5 minutes	Debrief
5 minutes	Break
10 minutes	<p>Put it in Perspective Key Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put It In Perspective (PIIP) helps to build Optimism. Show hidden slide on benefits of optimism if needed. • Catastrophizing is when you waste critical energy ruminating about the irrational worst-case outcomes of a situation, which prevents you from taking purposeful action. Differentiate catastrophizing from identifying and planning for the worst case (contingency planning). Identifying the potential worst case and having a plan to deal with it if it were to happen is what good Soldiers do. Catastrophizing—when you are stuck in your head and are generating catastrophic fantasies—is not helpful.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of PIIP is to lower anxiety so that you can accurately assess the situation and deal with it. • Make the point that Put it in Perspective is especially important when one is depleted because that is when the tendency to catastrophize is greatest. • Mention that catastrophizing is not simply pessimism; it's rumination which prevents purposeful action. It can happen in our personal or professional lives.
20 minutes (about 5 min per step)	<p>PIIP Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: List worst-case outcomes. • Step 2: List best-case outcomes. • Step 3: List most likely outcomes. • Step 4: Identify plan for dealing with most likely. <p>Note: Emphasize that order is very important. Listing Worst Case then Best Case (in that order) “jolts” people out of their anxiety so they are better able to list the accurate, most likely outcomes of a situation. Point out that the Most Likely outcomes may not be all positive, but listing them allows one to develop a plan.</p>
	<p>Case Study</p> <p>Have a student read the scenario. <i>You're a brigade ops officer. It's Friday evening, and the Commander called you at home asking about the tasking you received to provide information to higher. Apparently, what you provided was incomplete, so he's having the battalion commanders meet at his house to put something together. They live on post and you live 40 minutes away.</i></p> <p>(Case study created by Mark Tolmachoff, edited by Dr. Amy Adler & Major Dennis McGurk.)</p> <p>Step 1: Worst Case</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell students that you want them to catastrophize. Show the first thought on the screen and then ask the students to identify what they would think next. Use the question, “And then what happens?” after each thought. Continue to get catastrophic thoughts from the students. If they are not giving catastrophic thoughts, use the ones on the slide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I'll lose all credibility with my commander and the battalion commanders.</i> • <i>The rest of my tour will be absolutely miserable!</i> • <i>I'll get smoked on my OER.</i> • <i>I'll never be selected for command.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I won't get promoted.</i> • <i>I'll have to get out of the Army and become a Walmart greeter.</i> • <i>The bank will foreclose on the house, and I'll have to live on the street.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ask students to think about what it feels like when these thoughts are racing through their heads. 3. Point out that, in the moment, catastrophic thoughts feel real. Proof that it feels real is that our bodies react strongly (e.g., anxiety, hands sweating, heart racing, confused thinking, agitation, etc.). <p>Review Step 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List "Worst Case" as chain. Keep asking "And then what happens?" 2. Don't stop until you've exhausted what is running through your head. 3. Rate your mood, focus, and energy level while you are in WCST. <p>Step 2: Best Case</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to generate the absolute Best Case scenario thoughts about the same scenario. Show the first thought on the slide to start the process. 2. After each thought ask, "And then what happens?" If students are having difficulty generating BCST, show the other thoughts on the slide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Commander will realize that my info was right after all.</i> • <i>He and the other commanders will think I walk on water.</i> • <i>I'll be frocked to lieutenant colonel.</i> • <i>I'll get a great OER and will be selected for command.</i> • <i>I'll eventually become the Army Chief of Staff.</i> <p>Review Step 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List "Best Case" as chain. 2. Don't stop until you run out of ideas. 3. Rate your mood, focus, and energy level while in the midst of creating the positive outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out that Best Case may be more challenging to list than Worst Case because of the negativity bias. • Remind students that the Best Case jolts them out of their catastrophic thoughts, so it is important to exhaust the Best Case Scenario thoughts, just as they exhausted the catastrophic thoughts.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that the Best Case thoughts are as unlikely as the Worst Case thoughts. If they are not as unlikely, point this out to the students and reinforce that the difficulty in generating Best Case shows the strength of tendency to pay more attention to the bad than the good. <p>Step 3: Most Likely</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to generate the Most Likely Scenario for the same situation. 2. Use the points on the slide if necessary. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I'll arrive and some commanders will be mad at me.</i> • <i>The commanders will still be working on the tasker.</i> • <i>I'll take responsibility, apologize, and assure the Commander this won't happen again.</i> • <i>I'll play a key role in fixing the problem.</i> • <i>They'll realized I screwed this one up, but . . .</i> • <i>They'll acknowledge that my other work has been OK.</i> • <i>My career will still be intact.</i> <p>Review Step 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List the Most Likely outcomes, focusing on emotions, behaviors, and other people. 2. Check for accuracy. Move to different column, if necessary. 3. Assess your mood, focus, and energy level while creating the Most Likely list. 4. Develop plan for dealing with the Most Likely outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that when considering the Most Likely scenario it is important to think about outcomes that affect you as well as others, and to consider the impact of the situation on your feelings and behaviors. • Point out that the Most Likely scenario will likely include negative outcomes. The goal is to identify the likely negative outcomes of a situation so that you can develop a plan to deal with them. Most Likely outcomes warrant our attention and planning. Catastrophic scenarios do not. <p>Step 4 Develop a Plan of Action</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to identify an action plan based on the Most Likely outcomes. 2. Show the points on the slide and point out how the plan follows from the Most Likely.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I'll jump in the car and get to the Commander's house as fast as possible.</i> • <i>I'll take responsibility and apologize.</i> • <i>I'll make sure I provide valuable input.</i> • <i>I won't be defensive; I won't let it get me down.</i> • <i>I'll learn from this experience and make sure it doesn't happen again.</i> • <i>Next time one of my subordinates messes up, I'll keep in mind that everyone makes mistakes.</i> <p>Review Step 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a plan for dealing with the Most Likely outcomes. 2. If necessary, briefly develop a plan for preventing Worst and increasing Best (BRIEFLY!)
2 minutes	<p>Review Key Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catastrophizing: Depletes energy, stops problem solving, and generates unhelpful anxiety. • Order matters: Look at the Worst, then generate the Best; this order will help you focus on the Most Likely. • Make a plan: Create a plan for dealing with the Most Likely situation. • Optimism: PIIP builds Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Optimism, Mental Agility.
15 minutes	<p>Group Practical Exercise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the group select an appropriate Activating Event (from the slide or make one up). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Received difficult task with little time to plan</i> • <i>The Corps Commander walked into the building unexpectedly and wants a briefing. You're the senior officer present.</i> 2. Facilitate Worst Case Scenario (on flip chart or dry erase board on the left) and then the Best Case Scenario (flip chart or dry erase on the right): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the question "And then what happens?" until the group stops generating ideas. • If they have difficulty coming up with unlikely Best Case, remind them of the negativity bias. 3. Facilitate Most Likely Scenario (flip chart or dry erase board in middle):

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students to include feelings and behaviors, not just events (e.g., “I’m anxious, I snap at subordinates.”) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Check that the thoughts are in the appropriate columns. Move any to a different column if necessary. Ask students to name three to five action steps they can take to deal with the Most Likely Scenario. <p>Debrief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What did you learn through this exercise?</i> <i>Which scenario was the most difficult to create (Worst, Best, Most Likely)? Why?</i> <i>How can you use this skill as a leader?</i> <i>Potential pitfalls for leaders?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sounding condescending Dismissing concerns/anxiety Not validating their experience Not staying in leader mode <i>How would this skill benefit your unit?</i>
20 minutes	<p>Paired Practical Exercise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students work with a partner. Students select an Activating Event and then identify the Worst Case, Best Case, and Most Likely Scenario. Participants develop a plan with their partners for dealing with the Most Likely outcomes.
5 minutes	<p>Debrief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What situations will PIIP be most helpful with?</i> <i>How can PIIP make you a better leader?</i> <i>How can PIIP help Soldiers be more effective in coping with stress on and off duty?</i> <p>Remind them of homework for next time.</p>

Lesson 4 Social

*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being
and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*

Preamble to the Constitution of
the World Health Organization

Most Soldiers will acknowledge, no matter how bad the assignment, the mission, or the conditions, it is the people they work with that make the difference. Social connections, at work and elsewhere, do figure prominently in our well-being (Diener, & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Lopez, 2009; Peterson, 2006). The following highlights some of benefits of social connections and offers an empirically validated method for strengthening those bonds.

In *A Primer in Positive Psychology*, Chris Peterson (2006) identifies many factors correlated with happiness. Of those, interpersonal factors such as friends, marriage, extraversion, and gratitude, are consistently among the strongest correlates. Reviewing studies that included over 100,000 participants in 49 countries, Helliwell and Putnam (2004) found that trusting and reciprocal social ties were significantly related to happiness and life satisfaction – both directly and through their positive impact on health. They cautiously noted they could not say whether social connections caused happiness and life satisfaction or if life satisfaction and happiness fostered strong social connections. Others, however, assert that it works both ways; happiness leads to better relationships, *and* relationships make people happy (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

Not all relationships are equal though; some are more beneficial than others (Campo et al., 2009). Close relationships characterized by mutual understanding, caring, and validation of each other, generate the most happiness (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). These relationships offer security in which partners can share intimate details about themselves and can count on

each other for support. Social support in turn buffers against the effects of stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Peterson, 2006).

Research also indicates that social contact positively influences happiness. In one study, participants were given alarms and asked to complete a mood survey when the alarm sounded randomly during the day. Results showed that both introverts and extraverts experienced more positive emotions when they were with other people. Another study of 1,000 women found they were happiest when they were with others and the least happy when they were alone (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

Benefits of Close Relationships. Close relationships allow us to love and be loved. They enable us to feel secure and cared for. They are sources of encouragement, support, and mentorship. When adversity strikes, they can provide emotional support, compassion, advice, solutions, and tangible aid (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Peterson, 2006). They free up our psychological resources so that we may focus on more pressing concerns. People who experience trauma fare better in the company of others (Davis, Grills-Tauchel, & Ollendick, 2010; Davydov, Stewart, Ritchie, & Chaudieu, 2010). Indeed, we often seek the company of others in stressful situations. In one particular study, participants had to wait 10 minutes before they participated in an experiment in which they anticipated receiving painful electrical shocks. Given a choice between waiting alone or waiting with others, they chose to wait with others (Schacter, 1959, as cited in Peterson, 2006). On the other end of the spectrum, sharing *positive* events with others generally increases our enjoyment (Aron, Norman, Aron, McKenna, & Heyman, 2000; Crawford, Houts, Huston, & George, 2002; Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

People who have low relationship anxiety and who are comfortable with closeness and intimacy experience many benefits compared to those who are less secure (Lopez, 2009). The

former enjoy more positive emotions, less pessimism, hopeful goal-oriented thinking, greater openness to new experiences, a more confident approach to work, and higher job satisfaction. For example, Hazan and Shaver (1990) conducted a study of 670 adults who responded to a questionnaire in a major newspaper followed by a second study of a subset of that group (387). They found that secure subjects, compared to those who weren't, approached their work with confidence, enjoyed their work, and had relatively few fears of failure. Additionally, although they valued their work, they tended to value relationships more and generally did not allow work to interfere with those relationships. The studies also showed that secure attachment was also associated with greater overall well-being. Compared to the insecure participants, secure subjects were less likely to report suffering from loneliness and depression, anxiety, or irritability and were less likely to report having had colds or flu. One potential shortcoming of the studies was the lack of information on workplace conditions, which naturally affect people's satisfaction with their work (Hazan & Shaver, 1990).

Studies also show that secure individuals are also better able to capitalize on positive emotions (Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000). In three studies involving a total of 350 college students, subjects were assessed for relationship attachment style. Experimental groups were induced to feel positive emotions by either recalling and writing about a happy event or by watching a comedy film. Subjects then completed tests requiring them to categorize words into like groups or to identify patterns and think of words that were related. The findings showed that securely attached individuals responded to positive emotions with broader categorization and better creative problem-solving (Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000).

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Securely attached adults also have lower levels of indecisiveness, are less prone to work burnout (Lopez, 2009), and exhibit fewer symptoms of post-traumatic distress (Fraley, Fazzari, Bonanno, & Dekel, 2006). Fraley et al. (2006) studied 47 individuals who were in or within several blocks of the World Trade Center towers on September 11, 2001. The study participants provided data 7 and 18 months after the attacks. Friends and relatives also provided evaluations of the participants. The study showed that securely attached individuals exhibited fewer symptoms of PTSD and depression and were viewed by friends and relatives as adjusting well following the attacks (Fraley et al., 2006). It comes as no surprise, then, that the Army seeks to foster social fitness, which it describes as “developing and maintaining trusted, valued relationships and friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views, and experiences” (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010).

Relationships and Organizations. Given the amount of time people spend at work, and the amount of personal interactions required to run a large organization, it seems logical that the quality of personal connections greatly affects individual *and* organizational well-being. High-quality personal connections are generative whereas low-quality connections are depleting. The former foster individual and organizational growth, while the latter hinders it. High-quality connections are those that allow for the safe display of emotion – both positive and negative. They are also able to withstand stress or conflict and still function in a variety of situations. High-quality connections allow for open sharing of ideas and experiences (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). They facilitate creativity. These connections are experienced as feeling alive, regarding others positively, and with a shared sense of participation. They are associated with greater physical and psychological health, such as sense of worth, reduced anxiety, reduced blood

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pressure, stronger immune system, and longer life. From an organizational perspective, connections allow for an exchange of valuable commodities: trust, support, information, advice, praise, opportunities, and so on (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003).

Given that strong, supportive relationships are good for individuals and organizations, we turn now to an effective skill for fostering such relationships. Gable, Gonzaga, and Strachman (2006) have shown that a significant other's response to good news is actually a better predictor of relationship well-being than an individual's support when the partner reveals bad personal news. The technique they describe is termed active-constructive responding, and it involves responding enthusiastically, asking positive questions, and sharing in the other person's joy. It helps the teller to bask in their good fortune. The active-constructive response confirms the importance of the event and its implications, shows that the partner has intimate knowledge of the other, and demonstrates that the partner cares. Exchanges of this type increase positive emotions in both partners and generate greater satisfaction with the relationship. It is worth noting that active-constructive responding also works with more casual relationships – not just close, personal affiliations.

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Learning Objectives. Understand the importance of strong relationships and their impact on well-being and employ methods to improve relationships.

Student Homework.

Read: (62 pages)

Gable, S. L., Gonzaga, G. C., & Strachman, A. (2006). Will you be there for me when things go right? Supportive responses to positive event disclosures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 91(5), 904-917. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.91.5.904

Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). Chapter 5: Investing in social connections. In *The how of happiness* (pp. 125-149). New York: Penguin Press.

Peterson, C. (2006). Chapter 10: Positive interpersonal relationships. In *A primer in positive psychology* (pp. 249-274). New York: Oxford University Press.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student reading plus the following.

Kauffman, C., & Silberman, J. (2009). Finding and fostering the positive in relationships: Positive interventions in couples therapy. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 65(5), 520-531.

Lesson 4 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
7 minutes	Welcome. Ask for any feedback on skills/concepts students have learned thus far (character strengths, ATC, Thinking Traps, Put It in Perspective) Introduction and Agenda for today.
15 minutes	Engage students. Questions should push some emotional buttons to get students engaged and interested in learning. <i>What are your experiences with dysfunctional relationships?</i> Note: Limit the time devoted to this question. The intent is to quickly engage the students and to provide a contrast for good relationships. <i>What was it like when you were in a unit or with friends characterized by <u>good</u></i>

	<p><i>relationships? "Good" meaning trusting, supportive, with open communication.</i></p> <p><i>Why should Comprehensive Soldier Fitness include "social" as one of the dimensions of strength?</i></p> <p>Allow students to share their ideas. As a reminder, CSF describes the social dimension as "Developing and maintaining trusted, valued relationships and friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views, and experiences"</p>
35 minutes	<p>Discussion of benefits of social relations.</p> <p>Ask leading questions to draw out from the students why good relationships are important (should be seamless transition from previous discussion).</p> <p><i>Think of your best friend. What do you get from your relationship with that person? What do you offer in that relationship? What are the factors (intrapersonal, interpersonal, external) that contribute to the closeness of your relationship?</i></p> <p><i>Think of a unit you were assigned to – or a class you were in – where you really got along well with your co-workers or classmates. How does that compare to a unit or class that was not close? What factors made them different? What was the impact on how the group(s) functioned?</i></p> <p>As students answer these questions, look for indicators of the key points below. Ask questions as needed to see if they were a factor/outcome. After several responses, show the slide with the key points. Note to the class – or have them do it – where these points were evident in their responses.</p> <p>As an alternative, show the key points on screen, and ask students to provide examples of when they experienced them. Have them elaborate as needed to get at what made it possible.</p> <p>Key points from the reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having friends is a strong correlate of life satisfaction and well-being • Using character strengths involving personal interaction are much more indicative of happiness than others. (zest, gratitude, hope, love) • With secure attachment: more positive emotions, less pessimism, hopeful goal-oriented thinking, greater openness to new experiences, a more confident approach to work, and higher job satisfaction. Lower levels of indecisiveness, less prone to work burnout, exhibit fewer symptoms of post-traumatic distress • Individual and organizational growth

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe display of emotion – both positive and negative.• Withstand stress or conflict and still function in a variety of situations.• Openness to new ideas and experiences• Facilitate creativity• Greater physical and psychological health, such as sense of worth, reduced anxiety, reduced blood pressure, stronger immune system, and longer life.• Allow for an exchange of valuable commodities: trust, support, information, advice, praise, opportunities, etc.									
5 minutes	BREAK									
20 minutes	<p>Active –Constructive Responding (ACR)</p> <p>(The following is an abridged lesson from the U.S. Army Master Resilience Training (MRT) Course, designed by Karen Reivich, copyrighted by The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. It is based on work by Shelly Gable)</p> <p>This hour is dedicated to learning a skill designed to foster good relationships.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There are four ways people tend to respond when others share good news, talk about a positive experience, or describe a success.2. Only one of the four styles leads to stronger relationships.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasize that positive experiences can be big or small.• Point out that the meaning associated with the positive experience is determined by the individual initiating the communication. (i.e. It may not be important to you, but the <i>person</i> sharing it is important to you) <p>Show examples of positive experiences on screen.</p> <p>Explain four response styles.</p> <table><tr><td></td><td>Constructive</td><td>Destructive</td></tr><tr><td>Active</td><td>Authentic interest, elaborates the experience; person feels validated and understood</td><td>Squashing the event, brings conversation to a halt; person feels ashamed, embarrassed, guilty, or angry</td></tr><tr><td>Passive</td><td>Quiet, understated support; conversation fizzles out; person feels unimportant, misunderstood, embarrassed, or guilty</td><td>Ignoring the event; conversation never starts; person feels confused, guilty, or disappointed</td></tr></table>		Constructive	Destructive	Active	Authentic interest, elaborates the experience; person feels validated and understood	Squashing the event, brings conversation to a halt; person feels ashamed, embarrassed, guilty, or angry	Passive	Quiet, understated support; conversation fizzles out; person feels unimportant, misunderstood, embarrassed, or guilty	Ignoring the event; conversation never starts; person feels confused, guilty, or disappointed
	Constructive	Destructive								
Active	Authentic interest, elaborates the experience; person feels validated and understood	Squashing the event, brings conversation to a halt; person feels ashamed, embarrassed, guilty, or angry								
Passive	Quiet, understated support; conversation fizzles out; person feels unimportant, misunderstood, embarrassed, or guilty	Ignoring the event; conversation never starts; person feels confused, guilty, or disappointed								

	<div>1. A key word in the Active Constructive box is authentic. It’s not cheerleading; it’s about helping the other person relive the positive event.</div> <div>2. Explain that ACR helps you to linger over the good experience a little longer.</div> <div>3. Point out that active destructive is being pessimistic and negative about another person’s good news.</div> <div>4. Point out that attunement/modulation is also important. That is, it’s important to regulate your response based on the situation and needs of the other person (e.g., if the person who shares good news is modest, offering lots of praise might embarrass him and shut him down).</div> <div>5. The skill is learning how to be active and constructive in a way that feels right to the other person.</div> <div>Key Points:<div>1. The goal is to use ACR when appropriate</div><div>2. One size does not fit all: It is important to modulate your response so that it feels right to the other person.</div><div>3. Using ACR doesn’t mean you can’t bring up concerns.</div></div>									
10 minutes	<div>ACR Demonstration</div> <div>Provide scenario and role-play with co-instructor. “Mark and Tracy”</div> <div>1. Be sure to use appropriate body language, affect, etc.</div> <div>2. Ask the group to name the style modeled and to discuss how that seemed to affect Mark and how it will likely impact their relationship. Slide builds.</div> <div>Mark: “Hey Tracy, my wife called and told me she got a great job.” Tracy responds using each style.</div> <table><tr><td></td><td>Constructive</td><td>Destructive</td></tr><tr><td>Active</td><td>That’s great. What’s the new job? When does it start? What did she say about it?</td><td>So who’s going to let your dogs out so they don’t pee in the house? Boy, with two incomes I’ll bet you’ll be in a higher tax bracket!</td></tr><tr><td>Passive</td><td>That’s nice.</td><td>My sister called yesterday. Wait’ll you hear what she’s been up to . . .</td></tr></table>		Constructive	Destructive	Active	That’s great. What’s the new job? When does it start? What did she say about it?	So who’s going to let your dogs out so they don’t pee in the house? Boy, with two incomes I’ll bet you’ll be in a higher tax bracket!	Passive	That’s nice.	My sister called yesterday. Wait’ll you hear what she’s been up to . . .
	Constructive	Destructive								
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Lesson 4 Social

3 minutes	<p>Bodies and Faces (show slide)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the point that body language and expressions paint a picture as vividly as words do. • Ask participants to describe the body language, voice tone, and facial expressions associated with each style of responding.
15 minutes	<p>Student Demo of ACR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select two volunteers for the role-play. Ask them to demonstrate all four response styles, saving active-constructive for last. Give them a couple minutes to prepare. 2. Ask role-players to stop after each response style, and ask the class to point out the response style and what the responder is doing well. 3. Ask participants to point out any weaknesses.
10 minutes	<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four types of responding: There are four ways people tend to respond when others share a positive experience: AC, AD, PC, PD. ▪ ACR: ACR conveys authentic interest, and the responder helps the sharer think more deeply about the positive experience. ▪ Benefits of ACR: ACR leads to stronger relationships, belonging, well-being, and life satisfaction for both parties. ▪ Effective Praise: Name the strategy, process, or behavior that led to the good outcome. It builds motivation, optimism, and winning streaks. ▪ Connection: ACR builds self-awareness, self-regulation, mental agility, character strength, & connection. Connection is a primary target. <p><i>What are the ways you give and receive praise in the Army (one-on-one; public acknowledgments, symbolic rewards, etc.)?</i></p> <p><i>How can you further incorporate ACR and Effective Praise in the way you cultivate teams, offer recognition, or communicate about successes (with Army and family)?</i></p>

Lesson 5 Social

Friends are relatives you make for yourself.

~Eustache Deschamps

The previous lesson addressed the many benefits of social connections and presented students with a communication technique – active-constructive responding – to enhance those connections. This lesson offers additional methods to foster social well-being.

Kindness counts. We intuitively know that being kind to others is a good thing, and research bears that out. When we are kind to others we tend to perceive them more charitably, and we foster a sense of community (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Showing kindness can also affect us physically. In a study of 427 women in New York, for example, those who did any kind of volunteer work enjoyed better physical functioning 30 years later. Another study of over 1,500 adults produced similar results over a period of eight years (Post & Niemark, 2007). Epel et al., (2004) postulate that loving emotions and helping behavior contribute to health and longevity by reducing psychological stress, which in turn reduces the physiological damage (cellular aging) caused by stress-related hormones. Additionally, Midlarsky (1991) posits that altruism in adults is associated with better morale, self-esteem, positive emotions, and well-being. The exact mechanism producing these benefits is uncertain, but she cites five possibilities: improved social networks, distraction from one's own problems, greater sense of meaningfulness, increased self-efficacy and competence, and improved mood or more physically active lifestyle (Midlarsky, 1991, as cited in Post, 2005). In a study of 423 married couples, Brown, Nesse, Vinoku, and Smith (2003) also found that helping friends, relatives, and neighbors was strongly associated with reduced mortality. They posit that this may be due to the cardiovascular benefits of positive emotions displacing negative emotions. Fredrickson (2003), for example, found that anxious subjects experienced reduced heart rate and blood pressure when induced to feel positive

emotions. Likewise, caring for others reduces symptoms in those diagnosed with PTSD (Hierholzer, 2004). Hierholzer found that Viet Nam veterans with PTSD experienced better moods, less rumination, and reduced isolation and suicidal thoughts when caring for their grandchildren. As one veteran noted about his grandson, “Any man who has to take care of that kid has to give up his PTSD” (Hierholzer, 2004, p. 177).

Kindness Activity. In a 10-week randomized controlled study, participants were asked to regularly practice acts of kindness (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Researchers hypothesized that acting kindly would impact happiness through mechanisms such as increased self-regard, positive social interactions, and charitable feelings towards others. They measured happiness at the beginning, middle, and end of the study, and one month later. Participants practiced acts of kindness either three or nine times each week and they either varied the acts or repeated the same acts each week. The control group merely listed events from the past week. Results showed that the frequency of kind acts (three or nine per week) had no bearing on well-being. The variety of the kind acts, however, did impact the participants’ level of happiness. Those who performed a wide variety of kind acts experienced an increase in happiness, even through the 1-month follow-up. The control group, however, showed no changes in their happiness throughout the 14-week study. Those who did not vary kind acts actually became less happy midway through the study, before eventually recovering to their baseline happiness level at the follow-up assessment (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). In a similar study, participants were tasked to perform five acts of kindness per week for six weeks, and the acts were to be done on a single day or spread out during the week. Interestingly, only those who completed all their kind acts in a single day experienced increased happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). It may be that spreading small acts of kindness over the week diminished their salience or made them less

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noticeable. The key take-aways are that timing and variety matter, and that being kind to others boosts individual happiness.

As discussed in Lessons 2 and 3, positive emotions have a multitude of benefits. Additionally, one of the likely mechanisms involved in practicing acts of kindness is positive social interactions. In this lesson on social fitness, then, students will consider acts of kindness they can perform in their daily lives. We'll look specifically at overt acts, as opposed to anonymous, in an effort to increase positive social interactions.

Strengths and Relationships. In the next activity, students will build on their knowledge of character strengths. As mentioned in Lesson 1, using signature strengths in new ways boosts happiness and reduces symptoms of depression (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Evidence also shows that seeing strengths or virtues in significant others is beneficial to relationships (Murray, Holmes, Dolderman, & Griffin, 1999). In a study of 105 married or cohabitating couples and their friends, Murray et al. found that individuals were happier in their relationships when they perceived virtuous characteristics in their partners. This held true even when the partners or their friends did *not* perceive those virtues. The researchers posit that to be happy, partners need to believe they are in the right relationship with the right person. Sustaining this belief may require an “interpretive buffer” at times. For instance, those who see the most virtue in their partners are more likely to interpret their partner’s words or actions in a positive light (Murray et al., 1999; Harvey & Pauwels, 2009). Stubbornness may be seen as perseverance or integrity, or an unexpected gift may be seen as an act of love as opposed to propitiation for some, as yet un-confessed, misdeed. When they do acknowledge faults, more satisfied partners see them as being behaviors specific to temporary conditions as opposed to permanent character flaws (Murray et al., 1999). In sum, people are happier in their

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relationships when they see character strengths in their partners, and they give their partners the benefit of the doubt.

Lesson 5 Social

Learning Objectives. Understand the importance of strong relationships and their impact on well-being and employ methods to improve relationships.

Student Homework.

Read:

Murray, S. L., Holmes, J. G., Dolderman, D., & Griffin, D. W. (2000). What the motivated mind sees: Comparing friends' perspectives to married partners' views of each other. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 36, 600–620. doi:10.1006/jesp.1999.1417

Review:

Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). Chapter 5: Investing in social connections. In *The how of happiness* (pp. 125-149). New York: Penguin Press.

Writing: Have students prepare to *practice acts of kindness* by identifying at least five acts they would be like to perform in the coming week. Encourage them to collaborate with family members or friends not in this class. Refer them to Happiness Activity No. 4 in *The How of Happiness*. They will use their lists for a practical exercise in class.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student reading plus the following.

Post, S. G. (2005). Altruism, happiness, and health: It's good to be good. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 12(2), 66-77.

Lesson 5 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Welcome. Ask for any feedback on skills/concepts students have learned (and hopefully used) thus far (character strengths, ATC, Thinking Traps, Put It in Perspective, ACR)
5 minutes	Using Strengths. The purpose of this concrete experience is to quickly get the class engaged and interested in learning. It incorporates knowledge of character strengths from Lesson 1 and gets students to consider how they use them and, more

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	<p>importantly, exposes them to new ways of using them. It also supports the goal of Lessons 4 & 5 by highlighting ways to foster social connections.</p> <p><i>Which of your character strengths can you, or do you, use to build relationships? How?</i> Give students 5 minutes to write down their responses.</p>
20 minutes	<p>Ask students what they came up with. Draw out <i>how</i> they use or could use their strengths. What are the specific behaviors? Be prepared to offer personal examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My <i>open-mindedness</i> can make people feel comfortable talking to me. I listen without judging. I acknowledge what they say and ask questions to indicate interest. • Using <i>gratitude</i> makes others feel appreciated. I say ‘thank you’ and smile to people who are usually taken for granted, like cashiers. I send thank you notes to people who’ve given me gifts or who hosted a party I attended. <p>At about the 15-minute mark ask, <i>How might your strengths hinder building relationships?</i> Be prepared to offer personal examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My <i>spirituality</i> may make some people uncomfortable if I’m outspoken about it. They may think I’m being preachy or broaching a taboo subject. • Some may interpret my <i>authenticity</i> as being too blunt if I speak without being tactful or discreet. • My strength of <i>perspective</i>, along with my introverted nature, may lead people to think I’m distant. I’m silent while thinking things through to gain perspective.
25 minutes	<p>Strength Date. (This activity is not yet empirically validated, but it is based on research in the areas of character strengths, quality of life therapy, and relationships. See Frisch, 2006; Murray et al., 1999; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; and Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005)</p> <p>This is similar to the previous discussion, but will focus more on specific relationships and specific activities students can do with others.</p> <p>Break class into pairs.</p> <p>Within each pair, one student identifies a relationship they value and thinks of an activity or group of activities (a “date”) that would allow them and their friend to use signature strengths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One student assists while the other plans a date. They then switch roles. • Students will have to make their best guess as to the strengths of their date partner. They may consider having their friend take the VIA Survey in the future. • If the chosen relationship is with a classmate, the activity should be something done beyond routine classroom interaction • If possible, use strengths in new ways.

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	Some of the married students may find that they “don’t do anything with friends anymore.” Either their friends are scattered all over the globe, or they only do things with their spouse now. They may consider a strength date with their spouse, or a “couple’s strength date,” in which they and their spouse do something with others.
10 minutes	BREAK
15 minutes	<p>Debrief Strength Date.</p> <p>Ask for examples of strength dates. Get a sampling from married and single students. Be sure to ask which strengths they plan to use and how. How do they acknowledge the strengths of their friend/partner? How do they think their friend or partner will perceive the date?</p>
25 minutes	<p>Exercise: “Top 10” Acts of Kindness</p> <p>The purpose of this exercise is to capitalize on the collective brainpower of the class. Students should discover many practical acts of kindness they may not have thought of otherwise.</p> <p>2 minutes to explain the exercise and set up</p> <p>10 minutes: In groups of 3 or 4, have students compare their lists of kindness acts and create a Top 10 list. Acts should be things they would like to do and would be likely <i>to</i> do, and they should be fairly easy to perform. Have them write their Top 10 on the dry erase boards. Have them link activities to their character strengths (<i>How would you use one of your strengths in this activity?</i>)</p> <p>13 minutes: Each group presents their list. Pick a few from each and ask why they chose them and how they would incorporate character strengths. Have one student or assistant instructor copy the lists for subsequent distribution (email, blog post, hang document online)</p>
10 minutes	<p>Wrap-up. Today we covered practicing acts of kindness and using strengths to build relationships, to include a <i>strength date</i>. In previous lessons we discussed using character strengths in new ways, ATC, Thinking Traps, Put It in Perspective, and ACR</p> <p>Homework. In addition to the assigned reading for the next lesson . . .</p> <p>Over the next week, practice at least one of the activities we’ve discussed thus far.</p> <p>Write a summary of your experience and post it to our class blog site. You are encouraged to read and comment on each other’s postings. Your summary should include, but is not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the activity or skill.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. How did you carry it out?3. What did you learn from the experience?4. How did you feel while doing the exercise / using the skill?5. What went really well for you? What, if anything, didn't go so well? What did you do to make the exercise work especially well for you?6. Now that you have done this exercise or used the skill, what tips might you give someone else to help them maximize their experience with it? <p>Your blog post is due one week from today. Feel free to collaborate with friends and family.</p>
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Lesson 6 Family

Almost no one is foolish enough to imagine that he automatically deserves great success in any field of activity; yet almost everyone believes that he automatically deserves success in marriage.

~Sydney J. Harris

The material presented in the previous lessons (the social dimension) is applicable to familial relationships as well. The following highlights additional research that focuses more specifically on married couples. However, it is important to note that many strategies that strengthen marriages are also suitable for fostering other relationships. In view of that, the following lessons on family fitness should be equally applicable to single participants as well as married. Likewise, for leaders responsible for the health and well-being of others, many of whom are married, these lessons offer tools to share with those under our care. For our purposes, family fitness is viewed as “being part of a family unit that is safe, supportive, and loving, and provides the resources needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment” (Department of the Army, CSF, 2010).

What Makes Marriage Work? Happy relationships are based on deep friendship, which is characterized by mutual respect for and enjoyment of each other’s company (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Couples in successful marriages tend to know each other intimately – they know each other’s likes, dislikes, quirks, hopes, and dreams. They hold each other in high regard and routinely express fondness for each other in little ways. Friendship protects against feeling adversarial toward each other. When positive thoughts about each other become pervasive, they supersede or displace negative thoughts (Gottman & Silver, 1999; Murray, Holmes, Dolderman, & Griffin, 1999). With a habit of positive regard, spouses feel optimistic about each other and their marriage and they give each other the benefit of the doubt. It takes a much more significant conflict to damage the relationship (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

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Friendship, however, doesn't prevent arguments. Through decades of research, John and Julie Gottman have identified communication styles and behaviors that routinely damage relationships: criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling. Conversely, they have also found techniques that foster connection and growth: introducing complaints gently, being open to a partner's bid for emotional connection, de-escalating negative feelings, and being open to persuasion (Gottman, Gottman, & DeClaire, 2006, see pp. 5-6).

Trouble Signs. Couples will argue, but how they argue makes a difference. You can predict, with 96% accuracy, the outcome of a conversation based on the first three minutes (Gottman & Silver, 1999). A harsh start-up, such as using criticism or contempt, typically dooms the interaction. As the conversation unfolds, there are four particular types of negative interactions that are especially lethal to relationships. Gottman refers to these as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. It is normal to have complaints in a marriage, but there is a difference between a complaint and a **criticism** – the first horseman. A complaint identifies a specific action that is bothersome, while a criticism is more global – it attacks a partner's character. A complaint might sound like, "I'm angry that you didn't clean the kitchen after I cooked dinner for us." A criticism would be, "You never help clean up. I do all the work, and you don't even care!"

Contempt is the worst of the horsemen. It can take many forms: sarcasm, cynicism, name-calling, eye-rolling, sneering, mockery, and hostile humor. It conveys disgust, which makes it nearly impossible to resolve problems. It is natural to be defensive in the face of criticism or contempt, but research shows that it rarely achieves the desired effect (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Horseman 3, **defensiveness**, does not prompt a partner to back down or apologize, because it is essentially a not-so-subtle way of denying responsibility and blaming the partner. The fourth horseman is **stonewalling**. When conversations start harshly, then move to criticism and

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contempt, which leads to defensiveness, which begets more criticism and contempt, one partner eventually tunes out. The stonewalling partner might hide behind the newspaper, start watching TV, or leave the room. The danger of this lies in the reality that avoiding the fight also means avoiding the marriage. It is more common among husbands than wives (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

The Gottmans found that happily married couples avoid the Four Horsemen by addressing conflicts in gentle, positive ways. They use a **softened start-up**, which is to bring up a complaint or problem gently, without criticizing or insulting one's partner. Additionally, in successful marriages, if a spouse reaches out for emotional connection with a comment, question, or smile, the partner **turns toward** that bid by being open, listening, and engaged. Turning away from a partner's bids for connections damages a relationship, but turning towards a partner builds emotional bonds, friendship, and romance (Gottman, Gottman, & DeClaire, 2006). Successful spouses are also adept at **repairing conversations** that have started to heat up. They de-escalate negative feelings by breaking the tension. A repair can be a bit of humor, a smile, a touch, an apology – something that helps both people feel more relaxed. Additionally, partners who **accept** each other's **influence** generally have happier, stronger marriages. Being resistant or domineering has the opposite effect.

In this and the following lesson, we'll introduce exercises that have proven successful for building intimacy among couples. We'll also address techniques for avoiding the Four Horsemen and building stronger connections.

Successful couples are intimately familiar with each other, and they never stop learning about each other. Gottman refers to this as having a detailed *love map*. As mentioned previously, couples in successful marriages tend to know each other intimately – they know each

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other's likes, dislikes, hopes, fears, and dreams. Couples with detailed love maps are better able to cope with stressful events. For example, in a study of 50 newlywed couples, 67% experienced a significant drop in marital satisfaction after the birth of their first child. The 33% that did not experience a drop were the ones with detailed love maps. Because the couples were in a habit of being acutely aware of what each other was thinking and feeling, they were not derailed by the changes inherent with the birth of a child. It's not just that they knew each other well, but they continued to update their maps as conditions changed – as they changed (Gottman & Silver, 1999). They maintained a habit of connecting. Having a baby is just one event that can cause couples to lose track of that intimate knowledge of each other. Military families face many major changes that can have the same effect – frequent moves, new jobs, promotions, deployments, injuries, death of comrades. The more couples know about each other the easier it is to stay connected (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

In addition to knowing each other intimately, successful couples **admire** each other and routinely express **fondness** for each other. They believe that their partner is worthy of being liked and respected. Gottman asserts that fondness and admiration are crucial to rewarding, long-lasting romance. Marriages with even a glimmer of fondness and admiration are generally salvageable (Gottman & Silver, 1999). The best test of whether a couple maintains these feelings is usually how they view their past. In fact, 94% of couples who view their marriage history positively are likely to have a happy future as well (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Those who can't recall what they even liked about each other aren't as fortunate. Fondness and admiration can be fragile. They can be eroded with prolonged negativity, but they can be maintained by reminding yourself of your partner's positive qualities. They are the antidotes for contempt – the worst of the Four Horsemen. If you respect your spouse, you're less likely to act with disgust

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when you disagree with him or her. Acknowledging and openly discussing the positive aspects of your spouse and your marriage strengthens your bond and makes it easier to address problems. Couples find that recalling their past together reminds them of all the positive emotions and characteristics that inspired them to get married in the first place. Remembering what was good about their relationship in the past recharges the relationship in the present (Gottman & Silver, 1999). In this lesson we'll use *The History and Philosophy of Your Marriage* exercise to facilitate discussion about happy events from the past (See Gottman & Silver, 1999, pp. 70-71). The purpose of the exercise is to help couples reconnect with their fondness and admiration for each other. It consists of a questionnaire designed to elicit positive memories and to explore each other's views of marriage. It can be completed by a couple alone or by using a friend or relative as an interviewer.

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Learning Objectives. Understand and implement strategies to increase relationship well-being in families.

Student Homework.

Read: (77 pages)

Gottman, J. M., & Silver, N. (1999). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press. Read pp. 1-77.


Optional Reading:

Murray, S. L., Holmes, J. G., Dolderman, D., & Griffin, D. W. (2000). What the motivated mind sees: Comparing friends' perspectives to married partners' views of each other. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 36, 600–620.

Instructor Prep.

Read all of the above in their entirety.

Lesson 6 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
10 minutes	<p>No overview. Begin class with the following.</p> <p>Show “Families” slide show. Double click on the slide below to open the slide show. Click to advance.</p> <div data-bbox="370 1371 755 1659"></div> <p><i>What are your impressions?</i></p> <p><i>How do families affect Soldiers performance?</i></p> <p><i>What are a leader's responsibilities (for your own family or for your Soldiers')?</i></p> <p>Allow students to process & verbalize their thoughts and feelings. Near the end of</p>

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	<p>allotted time, steer the conversation toward the topic of building strong families. This lesson will explore methods for strengthening families by strengthening the relationships within them.</p>
15 minutes	<p><i>Can we use what we've learned so far to bolster family relationships?</i></p> <p>Show the list below, ask for examples of how students have, or might use them with family members. What do they expect the outcome to be or what have they experienced using them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using strengths to build relationships (have ready a few ideas the class came up with during the previous lesson.) • Strength Date • Practicing acts of kindness (have consolidated list from previous lesson) • ATC • Thinking Traps • Put It in Perspective • ACR
25 minutes	<p>Love Map Exercise (used by permission from the Gottman Institute, personal communication with Ms. Kyle Morrison, 8 July 2010)</p> <p>This exercise is meant to be played with a significant other, but in class, students will practice it with each other. The intent is threefold. 1. Students should gain an appreciation for what makes up a love map – the intimate knowledge of their partner. 2. They should realize how much they know or don't know about their significant other. 3. Ideally, they will feel inspired to practice the exercise at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide class into pairs. Instruct students to partner with someone with whom they're comfortable sharing personal information. • Pass out eight Love Map cards and four Opportunity cards per pair of students. • Read instructions to the class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner 1 draws a Love Map card from the deck, then answers the question on the card. Partner 2 then draws the next card and answers the question. They continue alternating until the cards are exhausted or time runs out. ○ At least once during the exercise, each partner should select an Opportunity Card and read it aloud. Opportunity Cards contain activities that couples can do together or for each other. If they both like an activity, they commit to doing it. If they don't like the activity, they draw another card. For classroom purposes, the person drawing the card will discuss with their in-class partner whether their significant other would like the activity and how

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	<p>they might do it.</p> <p>Caveats: Since you're talking with a classmate and not your significant other, share only what you're comfortable sharing. What is said in confidence stays in confidence. For single Soldiers, form your responses for any close relationship of your choosing. If you can't think of a close relationship for which this exercise would be appropriate, don't force it; just be a good partner.</p> <p>Sample Love Map cards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is one of your partner's favorite novels?</i> • <i>What is your partner's favorite romantic restaurant?</i> • <i>What are two of your partner's aspirations, hopes, or wishes?</i> • <i>What would be an ideal job for your partner?</i> <p>Sample Opportunity cards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Write a love letter and mail it to your partner.</i> • <i>Plan a surprise party for your partner.</i> • <i>Surprise your partner with two tickets to some interesting place or event.</i> <p>The exercise should be light hearted and fun.</p> <p>(See Gottman & Silver, Chapter 3 for more details)</p>
5 minutes	BREAK
15 minutes	<p>Debrief Love Map Exercise</p> <p><i>What did you learn from the exercise?</i></p> <p><i>How would you use this game to improve a relationship? With whom?</i></p> <p><i>How might this be useful when you deploy? "This" can be a good love map or the Love Map Exercise itself.</i></p>
30 minutes	<p>The History and Philosophy of Your Relationship Exercise.</p> <p>This exercise helps couples foster admiration and fondness by recalling happy events from their shared past and by discussing their views about marriage. Couples may ask each other the questions below or have a friend or relative interview them. We'll use the interview technique for the classroom exercise.</p> <p>In the same pairs as before, interview each other (15 minutes each). Ask each other at least one question from each group. Share only what you're comfortable sharing. What is said in confidence stays in confidence. For singles, substitute the word "relationship" for "marriage." If you can't think of a close relationship for which this exercise would be appropriate, don't force it. Just be a good interviewer.</p> <p>Part 1: The History of Your Relationship.</p>

Lesson 6 Family

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss how the two of you met and got together. Was there anything about your spouse (significant other) that made him or her stand out? What were your first impressions of each other? 2. What do you remember most about the time you were first dating? What stands out? How long did you know each other before you got married? What do you remember of this period? What were some of the highlights? Some of the tensions? What types of things did you do together? 3. Talk about how you decided to get married. Of all the people in the world, what led you to decide that this was the person you wanted to marry? Was it an easy decision? Was it a difficult decision? Were you in love? Talk about this time. 4. Do you remember your wedding? Talk about your memories. Did you have a honeymoon? What do you remember about it? 5. What do you remember about the first year you were married? Were there any adjustments you needed to make? 6. What about the transition to becoming parents? Talk about this period of your marriage. What was it like for the two of you? 7. Looking back over the years, what moments stand out as the really happy times in your marriage? What is a good time for you as a couple? Has this changed over the years? 8. Many relationships go through periods of ups and downs. Would you say that this is true of your marriage? Can you describe some of these periods? 9. Looking back over the years, what moments stand out as the really hard times in your marriage? Why do you think you stayed together? How did you get through these difficult times? 10. Have you stopped doing things together that once gave you pleasure? Explore these with one another. <p>Part 2: Your Philosophy of Marriage.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Talk about why you think some marriages work while others don't. Who among the couples you know have particularly good marriages and who have particularly bad marriages. What is different about these two marriages? How would you compare your own marriage to each of these couples? 12. Talk about your parents' marriages. Would you say there were very similar to or different from your own marriage? 13. Make a chart of the history of your marriage, its major turning points, ups and
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Lesson 6 Family

	downs. What were the happiest times for you? For your partner? How has your marriage changed over the years? (Gottman & Silver, 1999, pp. 70-71)
17 minutes	<p>Debrief</p> <p><i>What did you learn from the exercise?</i></p> <p><i>How do your character strengths manifest in the history and/or philosophy of your relationship?</i></p> <p><i>How would you use this exercise to improve a relationship? How do you start the conversation?</i></p> <p><i>What difficulties did you encounter?</i></p> <p><i>What was the easiest to answer?</i></p>
3 minutes	<p>Ask for any final questions.</p> <p>Note: At the end of the next lesson, students will be tasked to use one of the exercises covered in Lessons 6 and 7, then write about their experience.</p>

Lesson 7 Family

My wife says I never listen to her. At least I think that's what she said.

~Author Unknown

The previous lesson introduced exercises to increase intimacy and enhance fondness and admiration – ingredients common to successful marriages. This lesson addresses additional critical ingredients – shared meaning and emotional connection.

Through observation and analysis, researchers at the Gottman Institute are able to predict with more than 90% accuracy whether a married couple will stay together or divorce (Gottman, Gottman, & DeClaire, 2006). More importantly, rather than just identifying what makes marriages fail, they've identified skills that improve the odds of marital success. Eighty-six percent of couples who complete their marriage workshop make significant progress on conflicts previously thought to be intractable. After a year of work, 75% of husbands and 56% percent of wives feel their marriages have improved from “broken” to “functional.” Moreover, one study showed that 63% of couples who did not attend the workshops but did read John Gottman's book, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, felt their marriages had improved and were still better a year later. These numbers are significant considering one of the most highly regarded therapy methods was shown to only achieve improvement in 35% of couples.

Shared Meaning. One element common to deeply satisfying marriages is a shared sense of meaning (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Couples derive meaning from the culture they develop together, from their common beliefs and values, and from the dreams they bring to the marriage. Shared meaning is reflected in their family rituals, symbols, and the stories they tell. The more couples agree about the fundamental issues of life, the richer and more meaningful their marriage will be. They don't have to see eye-to-eye on everything, but the more they speak honestly and respectfully to each other, the more their sense of meaning is likely to blend (Gottman & Silver,

1999). Greater shared meaning strengthens the marital friendship, which in turn makes it easier to cope with conflicts that may arise.

Our sense of who we are in the world often includes the various roles we play – spouse, parent, Soldier, son or daughter, etc. Our view of our role in the marriage, and that of our spouse, can add meaning to the relationship, but it can also cause conflict. Sharing similar views and expectations of our family roles fosters a deeper connection. Speaking openly and honestly about our roles in life can help couples reach a consensus – a shared sense of meaning – for their family. In this lesson we'll use the *Roles* exercise to facilitate discussion about the various parts we play in life and how they impact the family (See Gottman & Silver, 1999, pp. 253-255).

Turning Toward Each Other. A romantic, candle-lit dinner may fan the flames of passion, but it's the daily interactions that keep the pilot light burning. Each time we let our spouse know he or she is valued we strengthen our emotional connection. It can be simple things like calling during the day to ask how work is going. When a wife wonders aloud, 'Did I leave the oven on?' the husband says, "I'll check." When a husband complains of heartburn, the wife may say, "Are you all right?" While driving, one may say, "That clown ran a red light!" The partner says, "Yeah, he sure did." In each of these examples, a partner turns toward the other. Turning toward each other is to respond in a way that acknowledges your partner's concern, desire, interest, etc. (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Gottman terms these types of exchanges "bids" for the partner's attention, affection, humor, or support. Couples who turn toward each other's bids stay emotionally engaged and are more likely to stay married. In one study, for example, 130 newlyweds were assessed for how often they turned towards their partner's bids for connection. Six years later, those who were still married were the ones who turned toward each other about 86% of the time. Those who were divorced had only turned toward each other 33% of the time

Lesson 7 Family

(J. Gottman lecture, 2009). Through these daily interactions, they add to their emotional bank account. They are storing up goodwill that can carry them through times of conflict. Perhaps more importantly, turning towards your partner is the key to long-lasting romance (Gottman & Silver, 1999). It may help during conflicts, but it also builds what is good in the relationship. Turning toward your partner strengthens emotional connection. In this lesson, we'll use two exercises for building emotional connection, both of which enhance our ability to recognize and respond to our partner's bids for connection. One exercise looks at responding to typically mundane interactions, while the other addresses emotional bids when a partner voices a complaint.

Lesson 7 Family

Learning Objectives. Understand and implement strategies to increase relationship well-being in families.

Student Homework.

Read: (34 pages)

Gottman, J. M., & Silver, N. (1999). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press. Read Chapters 5 and 11.

Instructor Prep.

Brings worksheets for *Turning Toward Your Partner's Bids for Connection* exercise.

Read the above plus Chapters 1 and 9 of:

Gottman, J. M., Gottman, J. S., & DeClaire, J. (2006). *10 lessons to transform your marriage*. New York: Crown Publishers

Lesson 7 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Show video clip of Dr. Gottman discussing turning towards your partner, friendship, positive perspective, and meaning. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJ7RHLBdqGM&feature=related (10 min)
10 minutes	<i>What do you think?</i> <i>What does it mean to turn toward your partner?</i> <i>How do you develop a shared sense of meaning?</i>
20 minutes	Shared Meaning: Roles Exercise. (Gottman & Silver, 1999, p. 255) The purpose of this exercise is to help students to identify and talk frankly about their deeply held views about their roles in life – with the intent that they continue the conversation with their significant other to foster a shared sense of meaning. Have students pair-up and take turns asking each other the following questions. (10 minutes each) They don't have to be in order. Single students can consider a potential <i>future</i> role as a spouse or parent. 1. How do you feel about your role as a husband or wife? What does this role


Lesson 7 Family

	<p>mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>2. How do you feel about your role as a father or mother? What does this role mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>3. How do you feel about your role as a son or daughter? What does this role mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>4. How do you feel about your role as a Soldier? What does this role mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>5. How do you feel about your role as a friend to others? What does this role mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>6. How do you feel about your role in your community? What does this role mean to you in your life? How did your father or mother view this role? How are you similar and different? How would you like to change this role?</p> <p>7. How do you balance these roles in your life?</p> <p>8. Do your character strengths influence how you view or play your roles?</p>
10 minutes	<p>Debrief</p> <p><i>Was this exercise difficult? If so, in what way?</i></p> <p><i>Do your spouses know what your classmates now know?</i></p> <p><i>How would you start talking about these topics with your significant other?</i></p>
5 minutes	BREAK
15 minutes	<p>Exercise: Listen for the Longing Behind your Partner's Complaints</p> <p>"Often partners complain because they long for something good or healing to happen in their relationship" (Gottman, Gottman, DeClaire, 2006, p. 34). The following are sample complaints and the associated <i>positive</i> desire of the speaker (see pp. 34-35).</p> <p>Complaint: Why do you always let the garbage pile up?</p> <p>Longing: I wish that we could feel more like teammates taking care of our house.</p> <p>Complaint: You never call me during the day.</p> <p>Longing: I wish we could feel close to each other, even when we're apart.</p> <p>Complaint: I'm tired of making dinner every night.</p> <p>Longing: I'd like to go out to dinner with you, like we did when we were dating.</p>

Lesson 7 Family

	<p>In pairs or in plenary, have the class identify the longing behind the following complaints. When they complete these, have them think of additional complaints, preferably ones they've heard or said, and identify the longing. The purpose is to learn to recognize the emotional needs behind the complaint (as a step towards strengthening emotional connection).</p> <p>Complaint: It seems like so long since we've had any fun. Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: We haven't had sex in weeks. What's wrong with you? Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: I never seem to get personal presents for my birthday. Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: I'm just too tired to go grocery shopping. Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: If you keep spending like this, we'll go broke. Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: I hate it when you spend all evening on the computer. Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: _____ Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: _____ Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: _____ Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: _____ Longing: _____</p> <p>Complaint: _____ Longing: _____</p>
10 minutes	<p>Debrief. Ask students to share a few of their results.</p> <p><i>How difficult was it to hear the longing in the complaints?</i></p> <p><i>Did any of you have difficulty identifying the longing in your own complaints?</i> If so, ask if they'll share more about that.</p> <p><i>What benefit do you think you'll gain by listening for the longing?</i></p>
30 minutes	<p>Exercise: Turning Toward Your Partner's Bids for Connection (Gottman, Gottman, & DeClaire, 2006, pp. 236-239)</p> <p>Review descriptions of turning towards, away, and against bids for connection.</p> <p>Research shows that turning toward a partner's bids for connection fosters the</p>

Lesson 7 Family

	<p>growth and development of a loving, caring relationship. <i>Whether a partner wants sex, affection, conversation, or just some help with the yard work One partner makes a bid in the form of a comment, a gesture, a question, a touch, or a facial expression. And the other partner “turns toward” that bid with interest, empathy, or support.</i></p> <p><i>“Turning away,” by ignoring your partner’s bids has a negative impact. Whether the slight is intentional or simply caused by mindlessness, continually disregarding your partner’s bids leads to increased conflict, hurt feelings, and the deterioration of your relationship.</i></p> <p><i>“Turning against” your partner’s bids with arguments and hostility also has a negative impact. It can make the bidding partner feel hurt and fearful, so that bidding stops, feelings are suppressed, and the relationship begins to wither.</i></p> <p>Review the examples below (on screen)</p> <p>Bid: My partner pours me a cup of coffee as I’m working at the computer. Turning-away response: Silence. No acknowledgement. Turning-against response: “Looks like you made it too weak again.” Turning-toward response: “Thanks. That’s so thoughtful.”</p> <p>Bid: My partner reads aloud a joke that he or she thinks is funny. Turning-away response: “Have you seen my black shoes?” Turning-against response: “I can’t concentrate when you’re reading like that.” Turning-toward response: “That’s funny.” Or, “I don’t get it. Tell my why it cracks you up.”</p> <p><i>Students may note the similarity to Active-Constructive Responding</i></p> <p>Hand out copies of the attached worksheet. In small groups, have students write down responses to the bids.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Microsoft Office Word 97 - 2003 Docu</p> </div>
10 minutes	<p>Debrief. Ask groups to share the responses they came up with. Ask if they’ll share their experiences of actually giving or receiving some of those responses. How did it make them feel? What were the outcomes?</p>
	<p>Homework. In this and the previous lesson we practiced the Love Map game, the History and Philosophy of Your Relationship exercise, the Roles exercise, Listen for the Longing, and Turning Toward Your Partner.</p> <p>Over the next two weeks, practice one of these exercises with someone you’re</p>

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	<p>close to (or would like to become closer to).</p> <p>Write a summary of your experience. Your summary should include, but is not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the exercise.2. How did you carry it out?3. What did you learn from the experience?4. How did you feel while doing the exercise? And your significant other?5. What strengths did you use during the exercise?6. During the exercise, did you use any of the other skills we've learned thus far? How did it go?7. What went really well for you? What, if anything, didn't go so well? What did you do to make the exercise work especially well for you? <p>Your summary is due two weeks from today. You do not have to share it with the class if you would feel uncomfortable doing so.</p>
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Lessons 8 & 9 Physical

Lack of activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it.

~Plato

The human body is an integral component of psychological well-being. Those things we recognize cognitively or emotionally are experienced through the body, and our perspective of them is determined by our body's position in time, space, and culture. Awareness and control of the body greatly influences that perspective (Shusterman, 2006). Similarly, exercising the body improves psychological well-being in many ways, though the mechanisms are not yet fully understood (Mutrie & Faulkner, 2004).

Perception, action, and thought cannot occur without the body. Consequently, the body influences perception, action, and thought. The physical position of the body determines our spatial perspective. Through that perspective, we perceive what is to the left or the right, what is ahead or behind, and what is up or down. Similarly, we perceive time based on our existence in the present. In a more abstract sense, our perception of right and wrong, beauty and vulgarity, normality and abnormality are determined by the experiences our body has absorbed from society. As Shusterman eloquently stated, “mental life relies on somatic experience and cannot be wholly separated from bodily processes” (Shusterman, 2006, p.2).

He further asserts that improved awareness and control of the body facilitate virtue. He refers to virtue in the Greek philosophical sense of the individual acting according to his or her highest ability appropriate to situation. Awareness of bodily abilities and limitations and the ability to control the body enable one to identify and act in the virtuous mean (i.e. not to extremes).

Shusterman also highlights the error of considering the body as merely a means to an end. Focusing on goals is clearly important, but often times we need to pay more attention to the

Lessons 8 & 9 Physical

means of achieving those goals, at least initially (Shusterman, 2006). Awareness of the body can inform us when we are going astray. For example, noticing physical sensations, such as muscle tension, elevated heart rate, and temperature, can cue us to anxiety, fear, or anger. Recognizing these emotions affords the opportunity to take corrective action. More specifically, if I am anxious about public speaking, rather than focusing on giving a good presentation, I may focus first on calming techniques, such as controlled breathing and disputing negative thoughts. Once I develop the habit of calming myself I can spend more time thinking about each presentation.

In summary, mental processes exist in the body and are a product of the body's experience. Developing awareness of the body and improving our ability to control it allows us to regulate the experience and the resulting perceptions.

Expanding on this mind-body connection, Mutrie and Faulkner (2004) describe more specifically how physical activity benefits psychological health. Physical activity is any movement of the body that expends energy. They explain that physical activity can prevent mental health problems, such as depression, and that it has therapeutic value in treating depression. A 2009 meta-analysis of 58 randomized trials (2,982 subjects) showed that exercise is effective in reducing depressive symptoms in both clinical and general populations (Rethorst, Wipfli, & Landers, 2009). Further, aerobic and resistance exercises were equally effective, while combining them resulted in even larger effects. Maximum improvements seemed to occur within the first 16 weeks of training. For the overall population, exercise sessions lasting 20 to 29 minutes created larger effects than longer durations. Interestingly, low intensity exercise (50-60% max heart rate) reduced depressive symptoms more than higher intensity exercise (Rethorst et al., 2009).

Lessons 8 & 9 Physical

Evidence shows that physical activity makes people feel better as measured by subjective well-being, mood, and emotions. These results are both immediate (after a single exercise session) and enduring (from exercise programs). Significantly, recent evidence shows a causal relationship between increased physical activity and subjective well-being (Mutrie & Faulkner, 2004). Exercise can also reduce negative moods and enhance positive moods. Some hypothesize that endorphins released during physical activity have an inhibitory effect on the central nervous system, which produces a sensation of calm and improved mood. This is not yet confirmed, though (Peluso & Andrade, 2005; Ernst et al., 2006). Exercise has also been shown to reduce anxious feelings (state), while prolonged exercise programs can ameliorate an anxious predisposition (trait). A single exercise session can even reduce physiological responses to stress and enhance recovery (Mutrie & Faulkner, 2004).

Physical activity can also boost self-esteem, the most important indicator of psychological well-being. Physical self-worth, body satisfaction, and physical competence are shown to have consistently moderate to high correlations with self-esteem (Mutrie & Faulkner, 2004). In other words, when I exercise I am likely to feel good about myself physically, and I am, therefore, more likely to feel good about myself in general.

Exercise is especially important as we age. Better memory, abstract reasoning, and spatial ability in old age are associated with fitness, physical activity, and participation in sports (Mutrie & Faulkner, 2004). Physical activity also protects against dementia and Alzheimer's disease – potentially reducing impairment by 50% with high levels of activity.

Science has not yet definitively proven how physical activity produces or enables these benefits. Some possibilities include: biochemical changes, like increased levels of neurotransmitters; physiological changes, such as improved cardiovascular function;

psychological changes, like increased sense of mastery; or several mechanisms working together. It is likely to differ among individuals and their particular circumstances. Regardless of how these processes work, it is certain that the human body is intimately connected to the human mind. Our thoughts and emotions influence our body, and how we care for and use our body influences our thoughts and emotions.

There are countless sporting activities, programs, and exercises that improve our physical fitness. The following highlights two, yoga and CrossFit, which are practiced by many, but which are not yet considered mainstream in Western fitness culture.

Yoga is believed to be an ancient practice – some claim up to 5,000 years old – with many different styles and countless teachers and practitioners. With this magnitude of variety, there are no definitive, scientific studies proving the efficacy of all yoga practices as physical fitness regimens. In recent decades, however, there have been numerous quality studies showing the benefits of yoga *asana* (yoga practice focusing on physical poses). Specifically, research shows yoga to be equal to or better than exercise “in relieving certain symptoms associated with diabetes, multiple sclerosis, menopause, and kidney disease” (Ross & Thomas, 2010, p. 5). It also relieves symptoms of depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and schizophrenia. Studies have also shown yoga to improve antioxidant status, reduce perceived stress, cortisol, and blood pressure, and to improve blood glucose levels and heart rate variability (a measure of the heart’s ability to respond to changes in demand) (Ross & Thomas, 2010). One study of healthy subjects showed “significant increases in strength, muscle endurance, flexibility, and VO₂max after eight weeks of biweekly . . . classes” (Ross & Thomas, 2010, p. 9). It is important to note, however, that yoga did not burn calories or improve VO₂max to the same extent as vigorous physical exercise. In general, it appears that yoga *asana* produces significant

improvements in many measures of health – better than exercise in some cases – but it should not replace exercise for a fit military population. It would be an excellent complement to vigorous exercise, however. Conversely, it may be a viable substitute to exercise for those who are ill or physically limited.

In contrast to yoga, CrossFit is a relatively new addition to the world of fitness. CrossFit is a strength and conditioning program that improves fitness in a broad array of measures. It maintains a broad, inclusive view of fitness in the belief that nature punishes the specialist when he or she faces conditions outside their specialty. This is particularly appealing to the military, police, firefighters, and the like, who routinely face unpredictable physical demands.

CrossFit measures fitness by three standards. The first includes ten general physical skills: “cardiovascular/respiratory endurance, stamina, strength, flexibility, power, coordination, agility, balance, and accuracy” (Glassman, 2002, p. 2). The second standard is the ability to perform “well at any and every task imaginable” (Glassman, 2002, p. 2). The third standard is capacity in each of three metabolic pathways: phosphagen (high power for less than 10 seconds), glycolytic (moderate power for up to several minutes), and oxidative (low power in excess of several minutes).

The CrossFit program follows a hierarchy of development as depicted in Figure 1. Achieving increasing levels of fitness depends on a solid, balanced foundation. CrossFit employs an infinite number of routines (exercises, weights, durations, etc.) to enable individuals of any level of fitness to improve in accordance with the three standards (See

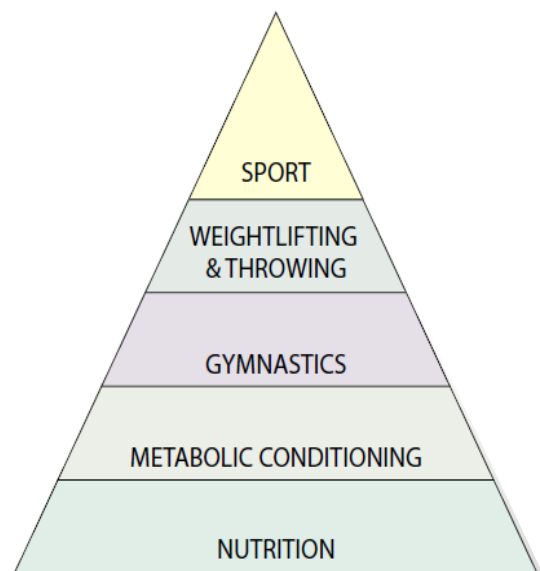


Figure 1. Theoretical Hierarchy of Development (Glassman, 2002, p. 8)

Lessons 8 & 9 Physical

crossfit.com for videos and descriptions). Most importantly, with CrossFit, athletes can improve performance in specialized events, even without specialized training. In other words, CrossFit “can prepare athletes for unknown and unknowable events” (Paine, Uptgraft, & Wylie, 2010, p. ii).

Lessons 8 & 9 Physical

Learning Objectives.

1. Understand the psychological benefits of physical fitness.
2. Understand the basic components and benefits of alternative forms of exercise (yoga and CrossFit).

Student Homework.

Read prior to Lesson 8: (22 pages)

Mutrie, N. & Faulkner, G. (2004). Physical activity: Positive psychology in motion. In Linley, P. A. & Joseph, S. (Eds.), *Positive psychology in practice* (pp. 146-164). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

Ross, A., Thomas, S. (2010). The healthy benefits of yoga and exercise: A review of comparison studies. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 16(1), 3-12.

Read prior to Lesson 9: (13 pages)

Glassman, G. (2002, October). What is fitness? *The CrossFit Journal*.

Paine, J., Uptgraft, J., & Wylie, R. (2010). Executive summary. In *Crossfit study* (pp. i-ii). Leavenworth, Kansas: US Army Command and General Staff College.

Optional Reading:

Shapiro, S. L. (2009). Meditation and positive psychology. In Snyder, C. R. & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 601-610).

Instructor Prep. Read all of the above.

Lesson 8: Class will meet at Gruber Gym for a one-hour, “hands on” yoga class followed by a question and answer session with the yoga instructor.

Lesson 9: Class will meet at the functional fitness facility adjacent to Harney Gym for a one-hour, “hands on” CrossFit class. A certified CrossFit trainer will discuss and demonstrate various exercises and coach students as they practice them.

Lessons 10 Spiritual

The soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul are everything. Unless the soldier's soul sustains him, he cannot be relied on and he will fail himself, his commander, and his country in the end. It is not enough to fight. It is the spirit that wins the victory.

~General George Marshall

With respect to the spiritual dimension, the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program advocates “strengthening a set of beliefs, principles or values that sustain a person beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength” (Department of the Army, 2010, July, Spiritual). Lessons 10 and 11 will help students identify their beliefs, principles, and values and offer methods to bolster them. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject, we believe it is important to first develop a better understanding of what spirituality is and is not.

Spirituality and Religion. For our purposes, spirituality is not the same as religiousness, though they frequently cross paths. There are no universally accepted definitions, but many people maintain that religion implies institutionalized practices, doctrine, and belief in the Divine, whereas spirituality may be considered a more personal search for the sacred or a connection to the transcendent (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Pargament, 2007; Post & Wade, 2009; Zinnbauer, et al., 1997). Admittedly, it is possible for a religious person to also be spiritual, or not, and for a spiritual person to be religious, or not (Post & Wade, 2009). However, 74% of Americans consider themselves both religious *and* spiritual (Zinnbauer, et al., 1997). The significance of all this in our classroom setting is to note that we can address the spiritual without endorsing or infringing upon any particular theology. We can assist the individual in his or her personal journey of spiritual growth, whether that journey is via religion, nature, philosophy, close relationships, or a host of other means (Pargament & Sweeney, 2009).

Why spiritual fitness? As the CSF description points out, spiritual fitness, or well-being, is a source of strength. While that may seem intuitive, we must be prepared to explain why. Here

Lessons 10 Spiritual

the concept of psychological wealth may be useful. Psychological wealth is the experience of a high quality life. It includes happiness, spirituality and meaning in life, positive attitudes, loving relationships, engaging activities and work, values and goals to achieve them, physical and mental health, and material resources (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008, p. 6). Psychologically wealthy (happy) people tend to function better, connect with friends, think more creatively, become interested in new activities, and do better at work. Happiness is not an endstate, but rather a way of living, that includes positive attitudes, meaning, and spirituality (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Spirituality, then, is an essential component to living well. Moreover, we are spiritual beings, and we need a sense of meaning and purpose that is larger than ourselves (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Spiritual beliefs and practices also help maintain or even enhance our mental health in times of crisis (Pargament, 2007). Spirituality can foster comforting beliefs, such as life after death. Positive spiritual appraisals can also help us find meaning in pain and suffering, particularly when viewed as discipline or tests and opportunities for growth (Frankl, 2006; Pargament, 2007). Spiritual support can reduce physical discomfort (Pargament, 2007), and social support from members of one's faith community can benefit in times of need (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Religious or spiritual rituals often provide an experience of the profound – something sanctified or set apart from everyday life – that elicits feelings of well-being (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). A strong spiritual life is also associated with optimism, self-esteem, lower rates of depression and suicide, less anxiety, lower rates of substance abuse and criminal activity, and greater marital stability and satisfaction (Pargament, 2007, p. 90). Spiritually motivated people are more likely to accept the reality of their circumstances and employ coping strategies (Frankl, 2006; Pargament & Sweeney, 2009). It is important to note, however, that spiritual beliefs can also be a source of conflict. Given our time

constraints, that is beyond the scope of this course. It should be remembered, however, that spiritual struggle is often a source of growth (Pargament, 2007; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Beliefs, Principles, and Values. To strengthen the beliefs, principles, or values that sustain us, it makes sense that we should first know what they are. One technique for helping individuals identify their spiritual core – beliefs, principles, values – is to have them write their own obituary. While this may sound a bit macabre, it serves to focus the writers on what is most important to them, to reassess priorities if appropriate, and to live life more fully (Pargament, 2007; Schacter-Shalomi & Miller, 1997; Yalom, 1980). Pargament (2007) further advocates writing two obituaries: one reflective of the life on its current path and the second written as if they changed course and lived their ideal life. Armed with the resulting self-awareness they would gain an appreciation of how their spiritual core influences their behavior and pursuits (Williamson, 1965 as cited in Pargament & Sweeney, 2009).

Strivings. Another exercise that helps to identify beliefs, principles, and values is to list one's personal strivings. Strivings are personal, meaningful objectives that people pursue in their daily lives. They identify not only what a person is trying to do but also who they're trying to be (Emmons, 2005). While achieving goals is important for well-being, research shows that striving for meaningful goals is also significant. Some have found that people who pursue personally meaningful goals enjoy more emotional well-being, life satisfaction, and better physical health than those who don't (Emmons, 2005). Further, high levels of personal meaning are associated with low levels of depression (Wong & Fry, 1998).

Emmons (2005) notes four categories of strivings or meaning that have emerged from research. Most people seem to strive for meaning in or through achievement/work, relationships/intimacy, religion/spirituality, and self-transcendence/generativity. Briefly,

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achievement involves commitment to work deemed worthwhile. Relationships/intimacy includes getting along with and trusting others. Religion/spirituality goals are oriented toward ultimate purpose, the sacred, ethics, a personal relationship with God, belief in the afterlife, and involvement in a community of faith. Generativity includes giving back to society, leaving a legacy, and serving beyond self-interests (Emmons, 2005, p. 735). These descriptions are not all-inclusive, but merely examples of strivings in each category. In community-based and college samples, Emmons (2005) found that intimacy, generativity, and spiritual strivings predict greater subjective well-being. Spiritual strivings in particular were related to higher levels of subjective well-being, positive affect, marital satisfaction, and life satisfaction. These correlations were stronger for women than men. In particular, college males claim the least spiritual strivings while older women who attend church profess the highest levels of spiritual strivings. (This is significant to our audience given the preponderance of young males in the military.) Research subjects also considered their spiritual strivings to be more important, requiring more effort, and to be more intrinsically motivated than others (Emmons, 2005). It is also likely that in the face of adversity people gain support from their spiritual strivings because they help to refocus them on what is most important in their lives (Emmons, 2005).

In spite of the evidence supporting the benefits of spiritual strivings, they may not always be helpful. Striving for the sacred through drugs, sex, materialism, self-worship, idol-worship, and the like can be harmful to the self and others (Pargament, 2007). Also, powerful spiritual strivings that are not accompanied by specific plans and strategies may produce frustration (Emmons, 2005). With respect to the latter, this lesson will ask students to clearly conceptualize goals, develop specific strategies to reach those goals, and to consider what will motivate them to

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use those strategies. They will also be asked to identify sources of support, such as encouragement partners, spiritual role models, and close others (See Lopez, et al., 2004).

Lesson Flow. Students will come to class with their lists of 10 to 15 personal strivings completed as homework. They will start the class by writing their own obituaries reflective of their lives on their current trajectories. Students will discuss their work then review their strivings to identify and discuss which are spiritual in nature. They will then develop specific goals and strategies and identify support to assist them in achieving their spiritual strivings.

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Learning Objective. Understand what spiritual fitness is, its benefits, and methods to increase it.

Student Homework.

Personal Strivings. Write a list of 10 to 15 objectives that you pursue (strive for) in your daily life. Strivings implies “action,” as in what you’re actually trying to do or who you’re really trying to be. They are personal – not what others think you should do or be. Strivings are central to your identity. The following are some examples.

- Avoid letting anything upset me
 - Work toward higher athletic capabilities
 - Meet new people through my present friends
 - Promote happiness and hope to others
 - Accept others as they are
 - Be myself and not do things to please others
 - Not eat between meals to lose weight
 - Not be a materialistic person
 - Appear intelligent to others
 - Always be thankful, no matter what the circumstances
 - Reciprocate kindnesses
 - Keep my beagles happy and healthy
 - Do what is pleasing to God
- (Emmons, 2005, p. 733)

Read: (38 pages)

Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). *Happiness*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Read Chapter 1, Psychological Wealth: The Balanced Portfolio, pp. 3-12, and Chapter 7, Religion, Spirituality, and Happiness, pp. 112-126.

Pargament, K. I. & Sweeney, P. J. (2009). *Building spiritual fitness in the army: An innovative approach to a vital aspect of human development*. Unpublished manuscript. Read 3-15.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student reading. Bring at least 15 Post-it® Notes for each student (different colors for male and female).

Additional Reading:

Emmons, R. (2005). Striving for the sacred: Personal goals, life meaning, and religion. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(4), 731-745.

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Pargament, K. I. (2007). *Spiritually integrated psychotherapy*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. Read Chapter 12, Drawing on Spiritual Strivings, Knowledge, and Experience, pp. 242-259.

Optional reading: Frankl, V. E. (2006). *Man's search for meaning*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Lesson 10 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
2 minutes	After greetings, begin the first exercise immediately – before giving an overview of the day's lesson. (Put students in the affective domain in accordance with the experiential learning model)
10 minutes	Obituary. Write your own obituaries (on paper or computer). They may be longer than the standard blurb found in newspapers. Assume that you have lived life much the way you are now. In other words, who you are at your passing is pretty much who you are now. Begin.
15 minutes	<p>Publish & Process.</p> <p><i>How do you feel about that?</i> Allow class to share thoughts and emotions.</p> <p>If it doesn't come up in the discussion, ask, <i>Do you see any of your personal values in life reflected in your obituaries?</i> (If responses are limited, ask about beliefs, principles, and/or priorities.) <i>Are your signature strengths apparent in "how you lived your life?"</i></p> <p>At the end of 15 min, sum up any significant points or trends that emerged.</p>
30 minutes	<p>Today's Objective - Identifying beliefs, principles or values that sustain a person beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength.</p> <p>Strivings. Write the four categories of strivings on the dry erase boards, plus one additional "other" category. Explain the categories, give examples (verbally & on screen), and note that not all our strivings may fit neatly in these four, hence "other" (See Emmons, 2005, p. 735). Note: students were not assigned the Emmons reading so it would not influence their lists of personal strivings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement/work • Relationships/intimacy • Religion/spirituality • Self-transcendence/generativity • Other <p>Have the students categorize their own lists, write their names on the Post-it®</p>

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	<p>Notes, then stick one note for each of their strivings under the appropriate category label on the boards.</p> <p>When complete, ask if they notice any trends (more or less in particular categories, more or fewer men/women in categories). Ask if anyone with spirituality as a signature strength had more in the spiritual category or feels especially strong about them.</p> <p>Show & discuss the findings on spiritual strivings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimacy, generativity, and spiritual strivings predict greater subjective well-being. Spiritual strivings in particular were related to higher levels of subjective well-being, positive affect, marital satisfaction, and life satisfaction, lower depression. • Correlations were stronger for women than men. College males claim the least spiritual strivings while older women who attend church profess the highest levels of spiritual strivings. • Ask if the students consider their spiritual strivings to be more important, requiring more effort, and to be more intrinsically motivated than others. • Likely in crisis that people gain support from their spiritual strivings because they help to refocus them on what is most important in their lives
10 minutes	BREAK
15 minutes	<p>Ask students for examples from their lists for any <i>beliefs, principles, or values that sustain them beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength</i>.</p> <p>When appropriate, ask <i>how</i> they sustain them.</p>
20 minutes	<p>Goals, Strategies, & Motivation. Remind students of lessons at the beginning of the year dealing with self-awareness and self-development (they took the Meyers-Briggs Type Inventory, Learning Styles Inventory, Proust Questionnaire, Nelson-Denny, Prentice-Hall, Multi-Source Assessment Feedback). Ask them to recall their Individual Development Plans in which they identified long-term goals and intermediate objectives to achieve those goals.</p> <p>Task them to continue that process now, by drafting a spiritual strength development plan. They may collaborate if they desire.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly conceptualize spiritual goals (strivings). Pick one to start with. If they don't have any strictly "spiritual" strivings, ask them to pick another of their strivings that they consider a source of strength. 2. Develop specific strategies to reach those goals (Note that it's OK if they don't actually <i>reach</i> the goal; there is much to be gained in the journey. (See Emmons, 2005, pp. 732-733) 3. Identify what or who might motivate them to use those strategies.

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	4. List sources of support, such as encouragement partners, spiritual role models, and close others.
15 minutes	Debrief. Ask students to share what they came up with. Get a couple examples from the spiritual category, but also ask to hear of any others.
5 minutes	Final questions. Homework for next time.

I consider it a dangerous misconception of mental hygiene to assume that what man needs in the first place is equilibrium . . . a tensionless state. What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task. ~ Viktor Frankl

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The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature, and God. As long as such a place exists, and it certainly always will, I know that then there will always be comfort for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles. ~ Anne Frank

The previous lesson led students through exercises to identify spiritual strengths that sustain them. This lesson addresses means to tap into or build sources of spiritual strength. The lesson focuses on two that are evidence-based and with practice, can be woven into the fabric of one's life – practicing gratitude and meditation.

Gratitude. The discussion of gratitude in this lesson on spiritual fitness does not imply that it is experienced only by religious or spiritual people. Since gratitude is often viewed in an interpersonal context, it could easily be addressed within the social dimension (Emmons & Kneezel, 2005). There is, however, a strong linkage between gratitude and spirituality. In fact, numerous researchers consider gratitude a spiritual emotion (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Emmons & Kneezel, 2005; Pargament, 2007), and gratitude is common to all major religions (Emmons & Kneezel, 2005). It is because gratitude is often experienced in relation to a higher power or that which is transcendent that it is included here.

What good is gratitude? Grateful people tend to be agreeable, emotionally stable, self-confident, non-materialistic, and happy (Watkins, Gelder, & Frias, 2009). Compared to less grateful people, they tend to be more empathic, forgiving, helpful, and supportive. Interestingly, people with stronger dispositions toward gratitude tend to be more spiritually and religiously minded (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). Additionally, Emmons and Kneezel (2005) found that people who attach spiritual significance to their strivings tend to be more grateful. As mentioned previously, happiness, spirituality, and relationships are key ingredients of psychological wealth (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). It would seem, then, that gratitude, at

least indirectly adds to the resources one can draw from in times of need. Furthermore, of the 24 character strengths, gratitude is predictive of subjective well-being, preceded only by hope and zest (Park, Peterson, Seligman, 2004). Of significance to this lesson, studies have shown that grateful people tend to have more coping techniques (Linley & Joseph, 2004) and fewer posttraumatic symptoms than less grateful people (Kashdan, Uswatte, & Julian, 2006). In a similar vein, a grateful appraisal of negative events fosters a sense of closure, decreases the unpleasantness, and decreases intrusive recollections (Watkins, Cruz, Holben, & Kolts, 2008). A study of 2,616 twins, found thankfulness to be associated with a reduced risk for depression, anxiety, and substance abuse (Kendler, et al., 2003). Additionally, McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002) found highly grateful people tend to experience more positive emotions, less depression, anxiety, and envy and to be more empathic, forgiving, and supportive. In line with Fredrickson's (2009) broaden and build theory, positive emotions such as gratitude help us broaden our thought-action repertoire and enable us to cope with adversity with open-mindedness.

Gratitude can have physical benefits as well. In a 10-week study of college students, subjects were divided into three groups. One group recorded major events that affected them each week, one recorded the minor stressors they experienced, and the third group described what they were grateful for during the week. Compared to the other two groups, the gratitude group had fewer physical complaints, exercised more often, felt more optimistic, and felt better about their lives in general (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

Researchers have studied numerous gratitude interventions, but this lesson will focus on one – *three good things*, also called *hunt the good stuff*. Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson (2005) found that subjects who practiced the *three good things* exercise experienced more

happiness and decreased depressive symptoms. In a study of a convenience sample of 411 adults, each was assigned a happiness exercise or a placebo control exercise. All experienced increased happiness and decreased depressive symptoms at the end of one week, but most returned to baseline soon thereafter. Only those assigned to *three good things* or *using signature strengths in new ways* experienced beneficial results up to six months (the limit of the study). *Three good things* entailed a nightly recording of three things that went well each day, to include the cause of those good things.

Meditation. Meditation is common to most major religions (Shapiro, 2009), but it can also be a secular practice (Wachholtz & Pargament, 2005). The following will highlight some of the benefits of meditation in general, and some peculiar differences for spiritually oriented meditation. Meditation is a practice in which one attempts to focus attention in a non-judgmental way and to not dwell on ruminating thoughts (Shapiro, 2009). There are two broad categories of meditative practices – concentrative and mindfulness meditation. Concentrative meditation seeks to restrict awareness by focusing the attention on a single object, like the breath, a mantra, or a word (Shapiro, 2009). Mindfulness meditation, on the other hand, attempts to attend non-judgmentally to all internal or external stimuli without ruminating on any one in particular. Some practices combine elements of both. Though meditation is often relaxing, it is not the same as relaxation training. The latter seeks to achieve low autonomic arousal, while meditation seeks to develop understanding, awareness, and insight (Shapiro, 2009). In addition to its more cerebral or spiritual goals, meditation also offers numerous physiological benefits.

Meditation has been shown to be useful in the treatment of cardiovascular disease, chronic pain, and dermatological disorders (Shapiro, 2009). Davidson et al., (2003) found that eight weeks of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) improved immune system

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functioning compared to wait-list controls. Meditation also reduces blood cortisol and lactates (Jevning, Wilson, & Davidson, 1978) while increasing blood flow to the brain (Wallace, 1986, as cited in Shapiro, 2009). In a study of 83 college students suffering from migraines, Wachholtz and Pargament (2008) found that spiritual meditation compared to secular meditation and relaxation had an even greater impact on pain tolerance. In the 30-day study, the spiritual group meditated on phrases such as “God is good” or “God is joy.” They were allowed to change the term “God” to fit their spiritual beliefs. An internal secular group meditated on phrases such as “I am good” or “I am happy.” An external secular group meditated on phrases such as “Grass is green” or “Sand is soft.” The relaxation group used a progressive relaxation technique, but was not given a meditative phrase. After one month of 20-minute daily practice, the spiritual meditation group reported significantly fewer headaches compared to the other groups. The spiritual meditation group also showed a significantly greater pain tolerance in response to the cold pressor task (submerging one’s hand in 2°C water and holding it there as long as possible). The spiritual meditation group also experienced a greater drop in negative affect and trait anxiety compared to the other groups. They also reported a greater increase in existential well-being (sense of meaning and purpose) and daily spiritual experiences (connectedness with the sacred). They also reported more self-efficacy in that they were better able to control their headache status.

Other studies have shown that meditation is an effective intervention for reducing anxiety and depressive symptoms in non-clinical populations (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998; Tloczynski & Tantriella, 1998) and for improving relationships (Carson, Carson, Gil, & Baucom, 2004; Fredrickson, 2009; Tloczynski & Tantriella, 1998).

Loving Kindness Meditation. The following study is the inspiration for the meditation exercise included in this lesson. Fredrickson and her team studied the effects of a seven-week meditation workshop in a large computer company in Detroit (Fredrickson, 2009). The meditation practice (80 to 90 minutes weekly) was designed to cultivate feelings of love and kindness. Two hundred volunteers were randomly assigned to the meditation group or a wait-list control group. Results for the meditation group show that participants' positive emotions began to rise steadily from the third week on. The rising positive emotions included love, gratitude, joy, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, and awe. Additionally, the rate of increase tripled after nine weeks (measurement taken two weeks after completion of the workshop). In other words, as participants got better at meditating they experienced a greater increase in positivity for every minute they spent in meditation. The study also showed the participants experienced more positivity even on days they did not meditate and regardless of whether they were alone or with others. The boosts were even larger when they were with others. They were better able to mindfully attend to the present and savor upcoming events. They became more accepting of themselves and saw their lives as more purposeful. They forged deeper and more trusting relationships and felt more supported by close others. They were healthier, they judged life to be more satisfying and fulfilling, and they experienced fewer symptoms of depression (Fredrickson, 2009).

So, what is the significance of this study to our audience? The positive emotions generated by the loving kindness meditation fostered psychological growth – more resources to draw from. The participants became more optimistic, more resilient, more open, more accepting, and more driven by purpose (Fredrickson, 2009, p. 91). They became more aware of their surroundings, were better able to savor the good in their lives, and got better at considering many

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different ways to reach their goals or solve problems. Positivity helped foster better social connections, which in turn means more sources of enjoyment and potential support. Positivity also predicts lower levels of stress-related hormones, which is beneficial to the immune system. Positive emotions facilitate lower blood pressure, less pain, fewer colds, and better sleep (Fredrickson, 2009, p. 94). Simply put, positive emotions are protective *and* enabling.

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Learning Objective. Understand what spiritual fitness is, its benefits, and methods to increase it.

Student Homework.

Read: (23 pages)

Fredrickson, B. L. (2009). *Positivity: Top-notch research reveals the 3-to-1 ratio that will change your life*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press. Read Chapter 6, Build Your Best Future, pp. 74-96.

Instructor Prep.

Complete the student reading.

Additional Reading:

Bono, G., Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2004). Gratitude in practice and the practice of gratitude. In P. A. Linley & S. Joseph (Eds.). *Positive psychology in practice*. (pp. 464-481). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Emmons, R. A., and McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: Experimental studies of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 377-389

Shapiro, S. L. (2009). Meditation and positive psychology. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.). *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*. (pp. 437-445). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Wachholtz, A. B., & Pargament, K. I. (2008). Migraines and meditation: Does spirituality matter? *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 31, 351-366.

Lesson 11 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Greetings. Play The Original Gratitude Dance video. (3 min, 25 sec)

	<p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9z2ELaBVJY</p> <p><i>How did that make you feel?</i></p> <p><i>What makes you feel grateful enough to dance?</i></p>
15 minutes	<p>Gratitude.</p> <p>Ask students what value they see in gratitude. Discuss benefits from the literature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grateful people tend to be agreeable, emotionally stable, self-confident, non-materialistic, and happy • More empathic, forgiving, helpful, and supportive. • Less depression, anxiety, and envy • Counters negativity bias • More spiritually and religiously minded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Happiness, spirituality, and relationships are key ingredients of psychological wealth. (gratitude adds to resources one can draw from) ○ Positive emotions such as gratitude help broaden thought-action repertoire and enable us to cope with adversity with open-mindedness. • Character strength of gratitude is predictive of subjective well-being • Grateful people tend to have more coping techniques & fewer posttraumatic symptoms • Grateful appraisal of negative events fosters sense of closure • Reduced risk for depression, anxiety, and substance abuse
25 minutes	<p>Hunt the Good Stuff (The following is an abridged lesson from the U.S. Army Master Resilience Training Course, designed by Karen Reivich, copyrighted by The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania)</p> <p>BLUF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds positive emotion, optimism, gratitude • Counteracts the negativity bias • Leads to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Better health, better sleep, feeling calm ○ Lower depression and greater life satisfaction ○ More optimal performance ○ Better relationships <p>Hunt the Good Stuff Journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record three good things each day. Next to each positive event that you list, write a reflection (at least one sentence) about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why this good thing happened ○ What this good thing means to you ○ What you can do tomorrow to enable more of this good thing ○ What ways you or others contribute to this good thing

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	<p>Walk through a personal example with the class. (verbal & on screen) Ask for an example from the class, then work through the steps together.</p> <p><i>How will keeping track of positive events and experiences affect how you interact with others?</i> <i>How will this affect your performance as a leader?</i></p>
10 minutes	BREAK
10 minutes	<p>Meditation</p> <p><i>What do you think about the meditation practice discussed in Positivity?</i> <i>What benefits did participants experience?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased positive emotions – love gratitude, joy, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, and awe. • More mindful of the present. • Better anticipatory savoring. • More accepting of themselves • Saw their lives as more purposeful. • Deeper and more trusting relationships, felt more supported by close others. • Healthier • Judged life to be more satisfying and fulfilling • Fewer symptoms of depression • More resources to draw from – optimism, resilience, openness, awareness of surroundings, better at considering different ways to reach goals or solve problems.
30 minutes	<p>Guided Loving Kindness Meditation (CD by Carolyn McManus, PT, MA, MS)</p> <p>Have students get comfortable. Explain that this meditation is not inherently religious or spiritual, but individually they may attach spiritual meaning to it. Even though you consider other people during this, it's about <u>you</u>, not them. Try to be open-minded. Avoid being analytical.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Loving Kindness toward a loved one 3. Loving Kindness toward yourself 4. Loving Kindness toward a neutral person 5. Loving Kindness toward a difficult person 6. Loving Kindness toward all of the above 7. Loving Kindness toward all beings 8. Loving Kindness Meditation closing

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10 minutes	<p><i>So, what do you think?</i></p> <p>Reinforce that results take time. Meditation is a tool.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss other types of meditation (e.g. mindfulness).</p>
10 minutes	<p>For Next Time.</p> <p>Reflecting on all the previous lessons, write a three to five page action plan describing how you might implement the concepts, tools and activities covered to improve the total fitness of yourself, your family or your unit. This is the primary assessment for this elective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your plan should be practical (something you can actually do) and should describe your desired outcomes – keeping in mind that total fitness is more process than product. Please also discuss your confidence or concerns in implementing such a plan (and how you might address these). You may also discuss particular areas in which you would like to learn more and why.

Lessons 12 Review

How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.

~Carol Sobieski and Thomas Meehan, *Annie*

The purpose of this final meeting is to review the key concepts and activities introduced during the course. Rather than presenting them in a lecture format, the instructor will ask students to describe how they incorporated the key points, skills, and exercises in their application plans. The intent is for the review to be enjoyable, with the students telling how they have or will use what they've learned. The instructor will have slides ready to serve as a reminder when needed and as a means of visually reinforcing the learning points.

Learning Objective. The overall learning objective for this course is for students to understand fitness in a holistic sense and employ concepts, tools, and activities to improve fitness in all five domains. This includes:

- Understand the concept of character strengths, learn how to identify them in self and others, and recognize how we use strengths personally and professionally.
- Understand the benefits of positive emotions and apply the ATC model to increase self-awareness and improve control of emotions.
- Develop mental agility by countering counterproductive thinking patterns.
- Understand the importance of strong relationships and their impact on well-being and employ methods to improve relationships.
- Understand and implement strategies to increase relationship well-being in families.
- Understand the psychological benefits of physical fitness.
- Understand the basic components and benefits of alternative forms of exercise (yoga and CrossFit).
- Understand what spiritual fitness is, its benefits, and methods to increase it.

Student Homework. Complete and turn in fitness action plan. For the final review, be prepared to provide examples of how you used the various activities learned during the course.

Instructor Prep. Review key points for each lesson. Ask students how they used the

Lessons 12 Review

knowledge, skill, or exercise or how they included it in their individual plan. The level of discussion will likely vary for each topic. Students will have used some exercises or skills outside of class and will have experiences to share. Some exercises may only be a one-time experience (e.g. writing their obituaries). For this reason, there is no set time allotted for each topic. The instructor should guide the discussion, and fill in with prepared notes and slides as needed. Save 10 to 15 minutes at the end to commend the class, say thanks, and take any final questions or comments.

Lesson 12 (2 hours)

Time	Activity
2 minutes	Agenda
8 minutes	Complete PANAS and SWLS
	Lesson 1 Character Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive introductions • Using signature strengths in new ways • What strengths do you bring to your work & home life?
	Lesson 2 Emotional Positive Emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think more broadly, or see more possibilities. • More creative, integrative, flexible and open to information • Grow psychological resources: life satisfaction, optimism, tranquility • Build resilience by increasing optimism and buffering against depression. • Positive emotions and broadened thinking are mutually reinforcing • Build good mental habits, such as mindfulness (awareness of the moment) and openness to savor what's good in our lives • Make us more able to cope with adversity in an open-minded way ATC (Reivich, MRT Course) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequences (emotions, reactions) • ATC build helps to build Self-awareness. • ATC gives your greater control over your Emotions and Reactions.
	Lesson 3 Emotional Thinking Traps (Reivich, MRT Course)

	<p>Thinking Traps are overly rigid patterns in thinking that can cause us to miss critical information about a situation or individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jumping to Conclusions • Mind Reading • Me, Me, Me (Personalizing) • Them, Them, Them (Externalizing) • Always, Always, Always • Everything, Everything, Everything (Character Assassination) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They're common 2. They narrow our field of vision 3. Notice patterns 4. Use Critical Questions 5. Mental Agility <p>Put it in Perspective (Reivich, MRT Course)</p> <p>Step 1: List worst-case outcomes.</p> <p>Step 2: List best-case outcomes.</p> <p>Step 3: List most likely outcomes.</p> <p>Step 4: Identify plan for dealing with most likely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catastrophizing: Depletes energy, stops problem solving, and generates unhelpful anxiety. • Order matters • Make a plan for dealing with the Most Likely situation. • PIIP builds Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Optimism, Mental Agility.
	<p>Lesson 4 Social</p> <p>Benefits of social relations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow us to love and be loved. • Enable us to feel secure and cared for. • Sources of encouragement, support, and mentorship. • In adversity, they can provide emotional support, compassion, advice, solutions, and tangible aid • Free up our psychological resources so that we may focus on more pressing concerns. • People who experience trauma fare better in the company of others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We often seek the company of others in stressful situations. • Sharing positive events with others generally increases our enjoyment

- Securely attached enjoy more positive emotions, less pessimism, hopeful goal-oriented thinking, greater openness to new experiences, a more confident approach to work, and higher job satisfaction
 - Less likely to report suffering from loneliness and depression, anxiety, or irritability and were less likely to report having had colds or flu.
- Have lower levels of indecisiveness, are less prone to work burnout, and exhibit fewer symptoms of post-traumatic distress
- Greater physical and psychological health, such as sense of worth, reduced anxiety, reduced blood pressure, stronger immune system, and longer life.
- Allow for an exchange of valuable commodities: trust, support, information, advice, praise, opportunities, etc.

Active –Constructive Responding (ACR) (Reivich, MRT Course; Gable)

	Constructive	Destructive
Active	Authentic interest, elaborates the experience; person feels validated and understood	Squashing the event, brings conversation to a halt; person feels ashamed, embarrassed, guilty, or angry
Passive	Quiet, understated support; conversation fizzles out; person feels unimportant, misunderstood, embarrassed, or guilty	Ignoring the event; conversation never starts; person feels confused, guilty, or disappointed

- Four types of responding: There are four ways people tend to respond when others share a positive experience: AC, AD, PC, PD.
- ACR: Conveys authentic interest, and the responder helps the sharer think more deeply about the positive experience.
- Benefits: ACR leads to stronger relationships, belonging, well-being, and life satisfaction for both parties.

Lesson 5

Using Strengths to build relationships and Strength Dates.

- How do strengths help or hinder building relationships?
- Using signature strengths on a date.

Acts of Kindness

- Impact happiness through mechanisms such as increased self-regard, positive social interactions, and charitable feelings towards others

	<p>Lesson 6</p> <p>Love Map Exercise (Gottman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build intimate knowledge <p>The History and Philosophy of Your Relationship Exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster admiration and fondness by recalling happy events from shared past
	<p>Lesson 7</p> <p>Roles Exercise (Gottman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared meaning <p>Listen for the Longing Behind your Partner's Complaints (Gottman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional connection <p>Turning Toward Your Partner's Bids for Connection (Gottman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional connection
	<p>Lessons 8 & 9 Physical</p> <p>Yoga</p> <p>CrossFit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity can prevent mental health problems, such as depression, and has therapeutic value in treating depression. • Makes people feel better as measured by subjective well-being, mood, and emotions. Results are both immediate and enduring • Reduce negative moods and enhance positive moods • Single session can reduce anxious feelings (state); prolonged exercise programs can ameliorate an anxious predisposition (trait). • Boost self-esteem • Better memory, abstract reasoning, and spatial ability in old age • Protects against dementia and Alzheimer's disease – potentially reducing impairment by 50% with high levels of activity.
	<p>Lesson 10 Spiritual</p> <p>Write Your Obituary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying beliefs, principles or values

	<p>Strivings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimacy, generativity, and spiritual strivings predict greater subjective well-being. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spiritual strivings in particular were related to higher levels of subjective well-being, positive affect, marital satisfaction, and life satisfaction, lower depression. ○ Correlations were stronger for women than men. • Spiritual strivings generally considered more important, requiring more effort, and to be more intrinsically motivated than others. • Likely in crisis that people gain support from their spiritual strivings because they help to refocus them on what is most important in their lives
	<p>Lesson 11 Spiritual</p> <p>Hunt the Good Stuff (Reivich, MRT Course)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds positive emotion, optimism, gratitude • Counteracts the negativity bias • Leads to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Better health, better sleep, feeling calm ○ Lower depression and greater life satisfaction ○ More optimal performance ○ Better relationships <p>Meditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased positive emotions – love gratitude, joy, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, and awe. • More mindful of the present. • Better anticipatory savoring. • More accepting of themselves • Saw their lives as more purposeful. • Deeper and more trusting relationships, felt more supported by close others. • Healthier • Judged life to be more satisfying and fulfilling • Fewer symptoms of depression • More resources to draw from – optimism, resilience, openness, awareness of surroundings, better at considering different ways to reach goals or solve problems.

Lessons 12 Review

10 minutes	<p>Commend the class for how much they've learned and grown.</p> <p>Ask if they have any final thoughts or comments.</p> <p>Offer sincere thanks for their interest and effort and for making our time together enjoyable.</p>
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